Div.Sch.
Quarto
BX
5917
.N8
M565
1977

DUKE
UNIVERSITY

LIBRARY

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2013

http://archive.org/details/ministersofgospe00durh

M I N I S T E R S O F T H E G O S P E L

DIOCESE OF NORTH CAROLINA

1741-1977

--ooOoo--

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE		ii
I.	CLEMENT HALL - Mina Hampton (Mrs. Tom)	1
II.	THE EARLY CHURCH IN THE CAROLINAS and CLEMENT HALL, MISSIONARY TO NORTH CAROLINA - Ruth Watson	6
III.	JOHN STARK RAVENSCROFT, FIRST BISHOP OF NORTH CAROLINA - Anne Moore	10
IV.	WILLIAM WEST SKILES - Ethel Reade	15
V.	THOMAS ATKINSON - Laura Graham (Mrs. A. H.)	23
VI.	MISSIONARIES TO THEIR OWN COMMUNITIES: FRANCIS J. MURDOCH and SAMUEL S. NASH - Julia Royall	28
VII.	BISHOP JOSEPH BLOUNT CHESHIRE, D.D. (1850-1932) - Priscilla McBryde (Mrs. A. H.)	33
VIII.	THE REVEREND MR. SIDNEY STUART BOST - Phyllis S. Bowman and Harold T. Parker	41
IX.	THE WORK WITH THE DEAF - Judith H. Pearson	45
X.	DAVID YATES - Sibyl G. Powe and Louise Newton	51

PREFACE

The following papers were written for presentation to the four chapters of the Episcopal Church Women at St. Philip's Church in Durham, North Carolina, and formed the Christian Education program for the year 1976-77. Many members of the Parish expressed interest in having copies of these papers, and it was decided to deposit a master copy in the library at St. Philip's, along with several photocopies from which further copies could be made.

It is important to note that these papers are not the result of original research, but that in general the authors made free use of the materials available, making no references to them and quoting freely. They are, in fact, informal programs, and not intended for any other purpose.

The paper on the Reverend Mr. Sidney Bost is an exception. It was presented to the General Meeting of the Episcopal Church Women at St. Philip's in January 1977, and is the result of original research and interviews.

Sibyl G. Powe and Louise Newton, Co-chairmen
Summer, 1977

CLEMENT HALL

Mina Hampton (Mrs. Tom)

Tonight we are going to turn back the pages of history and look at the eastern part of our state in the period 1740-59. This is a short time--only nineteen years out of the life of Clement Hall. As we look back over the counties of Chowan, Perquimans, Pasquotank, and Currituck, we find a vast, swampy, sparsely settled area--no highways, telephones, or fancy shops (remember, this is the time before our independence); travel is by foot or horseback. Before we find out about Mr. Hall I want to tell you something about the early history of the Church in this period of time.

Gabriel Johnston was Governor of North Carolina. During his term as Governor there were conflicts between the northern and southern counties. Johnston was a supporter of the Church, but he found some difficulties in achieving his aspiration for a State religion.

In 1741 an act was passed to establish the Church in North Carolina, but it was ineffective. This act was similar to the Act of 1715, which would divide the province into sixteen parishes and provide for the election of vestrymen for a period of two years. The Act of 1715 said the minister of the parish and twelve men would make up the vestry. However, the Act of 1741 did not include the minister as a member of that body. Another weakness of the Act: in the eyes of the Church the vestry was given power to withdraw stipends from a missionary minister. "If he shall be notoriously guilty of any scandalous immorality," they could also end the minister's services. There were attempts to remedy this Act but they were not successful. The Act of 1741 was the only one passed during Johnston's administration.

However, Johnston did try to bring about a stronger establishment of the Church. In 1749 he told the Assembly that there were things still necessary to be done in the colony. "The first is the want of a sufficient provision for maintaining the publick service and worship of Almighty God in which we are most shamefully and beyond all other provinces in His Majesty's dominions deficient, and next to that, a provision for the farther security of the estate and properties of widows and orphans."

Just before his death Johnston made another speech to promote religion, and the Assembly (no representative from the Albemarle area) immediately responded. "We assure Your Excellency," they wrote, "that we intend to proceed in the public business whereby public worship of Almighty God may be effectually supported, the virtuous education of our youth promoted etc." There were many missionaries in the area, but they served for only a short time.

The S.P.G., which is the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, divided North Carolina into two missionary fields--one on the northeast side and the other on the southwest side of the Neuse River. It was founded

in England in 1701 by Thomas Bray as a result of his zealous attitude. After a visit to the American colonies he pressed for more provisions and support for the clergy. He wanted to establish theological and classical libraries for the training of the clergy and the religious and cultural improvement of the people of the colonies. His idea matured into the formation of the Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge. His concern was for the support of the Church and the maintenance of the clergymen in places where no colonial establishment was provided. The American churches were under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of London, but the authority was too far off to be of any real assistance. Therefore Thomas Bray's ideas were promoted and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel came into being.

Now back to Mr. Clement Hall. Clement Hall was a native of England. We do not know his birth date or birth place. The first records tell us that he was one of the Commission of the Peace for that province and in secular life he enjoyed the confidence of the Governor, Attorney General, and other officials. He was a public reader in Perquimans County, since there was no minister in the area.

On July 19, 1741, he married Frances Foster, whose father was a vestryman in Edenton. About two years later he decided to become a minister. It is believed that he knew what the hardships would be for a colonial minister and this did not seem to disturb him. In 1743 he left for England with a portfolio of testimonies regarding his character and conduct.

On January 14, 1744, Hall was appointed minister, or itinerant missionary, to the four northern counties mentioned earlier, Chowan, Pasquotank, Perquimans, and Currituck. On May 31, Hall executed his bond as a missionary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts and arrived in North Carolina on November 29, 1744, where he began his work promptly. He and his wife settled in Edenton in St. Paul's Parish. He held services in the Courthouse. From the records of St. Paul's Parish, we find that there was a vestry meeting in Edenton February 25, 1745, in which it was ordered that the Reverend Mr. Clement Hall be allowed the sum of £60 per annum in process money. Two vestrymen were empowered to settle for the plantation in which Mr. Hall was to live and make the needed repairs at the cost of the parish.

Two days later, on February 27, Hall reported to the Society that there was no church or glebe in that part of the country, and that he had agreed to settle in Chowan County near Edenton and officiate in the Courthouse until the church was built. He had found many dissenters in Perquimans and Pasquotank counties, especially Quakers who were very hostile. "Several religious churchmen to be found and common people very naturally teachable and ingenious."

Many people admitted going to other meetings because they had not had an opportunity to go to church.

Mr. Hall set about his labors with vim, vigor, and zeal. He had some opposition from the dissenters but he encouragingly said their number was small "in comparison of those who are desirous to settle a minister and see religion flourish."

In May he rode throughout his mission and he stated that he had gone farther and in more places than any missionary had before; he had preached sixteen times, baptized above four hundred children and twenty adults within the four counties in three weeks. The congregations were very numerous, and the people behaved exceedingly well. He said it moved him with great compassion to see the harvest so great and the labors so few, "there being none but Mr. Moir and myself in this vast and now populous country." On October 8, 1747, Hall informed the Society that during September he had journeyed about 348 miles in his South mission. There he had preached twelve sermons, and in less than four weeks he had baptized three hundred children and eleven adults. Some of those baptized had been hindered by the Baptists, whose teachers had told them that infant baptism was unlawful, but Hall said that some who had been re-baptized by total immersion had seen the error of their way and had brought their children to him for baptism.

Mr. Hall kept the Society informed about his activities and sent several letters a year informing the Society of conditions and life among the people. Many times he had held services under the trees, since the chapels and courthouses were not large enough to accommodate the people. Mr. Hall reported to the Society: "The inhabitants of it, though frequently called upon by the Society to build churches and houses, and to fix glebes and salaries for settled missionaries, do little or nothing toward it; even the church at Edenton, where the Governor resides, and the courts of the province are kept, as in the chief town in North Carolina, though begun many years ago, is not yet finished."

In May 1750 Hall reported that he had been in bad health from September to March, and now he was with his wife, two daughters and aged mother and servant in pretty good health. He was beginning to feel the effect of his strenuous exertions, but he was performing divine service and preaching in five different places in his parish. He reported that the "courthouse in Edenton is still being used and a lay reader, Mr. Cochin, officiates, while he is absent in other parts of the parish. The most part of your Negroes are unbaptized: and too many have lived a wicked life: as tho' they feared not God, neither regarded man." In his last journey he had a private conversation with several notorious evil livers, who acknowledged their faults and promised better behavior, and desired him to assist them with spiritual counsel and direction. "I accordingly did, and have the pleasure to hear since that there is reform wrought in some: and that God will be graciously pleased to bring into the way of truth, all such as have erred and are deceived." This letter is signed "The Societies Weak and Unworthy Servant / Clement Hall." Hall asked for a three-month leave of absence but when the end of the year came he was still busy with duties and worried about financial realities. He wrote the Society:

> I have two infant daughters and my wife is pregnant and I have also an aged and infirm mother in my family; and I have with diligence and integrity served the honourable society to the utmost of my power for several years. I hope and trust that in case of my decease, they would be so good as to make up my salary for that same year also, and send it by my correspondent, towards the support of my helpless relations, and I have a deal of bad health and am now in a sick and weak condition.

From this we feel the missionary talked as if death was stalking him, but he was to contribute to the S.P.G. activities for almost another decade before he was to depart from his earthly duties. During 1751 Hall found things very discouraging and in a weak state of being. The church in Edenton was to be enclosed with brick and he asked that better provisions be made for the minister. He found out there was little hope of getting a bishop for North Carolina. He however did receive some books from England though they were damaged some by dampness. His mother died during this year and he was still suffering from colds. Hall continued to travel throughout his mission, both the northern and southern parts.

May 19, 1752, Hall told of a journey through the north mission, where he had preached to congregations so large that they "were some times obliged to assemble under the shady trees because the houses would not contain them." "I have thro' God's gracious assistance and blessing in about 7 or 8 years, though frequently visited with sickness, been enabled to perform as great ministerial duties as any clergyman in North America: viz. to journey about 14,000 miles, preach about 675 sermons, baptize about 5,783 white children, 243 black children, 57 white adults and about 112 black adults; in all, 6,195 persons; sometimes administering the Holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper to two or three hundred communicants in one journey, besides churching of women, and visiting the sick."

As he traveled still preaching, baptizing, and administering the Holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper we find that in one thirty-five-day period he traveled 536 miles, officiating in twenty-three congregations, and he wrote: "Where other missionaries could find only misery and discouragement, profane people and contentious vestrymen, he found happiness and hope and some measure of response to his goodness."

We skip to June 5, 1755, when Hall wrote to the Society, begging that he be given settled parochial work at St. Paul's, Chowan, an extensive parish comprehending the whole county, and besides Edenton, containing several chapels. He said his health was so far impaired that he could not otherwise last. He had traveled more than 2,000 miles in one year. The Society appreciated his work and granted the request.

Hall traveled and lived in a territory where many hundreds of isolated people were hungry for the bread of life and eager to receive the messages of a sincere, earnest man. His work was among simple struggling people unexposed to the scepticism and distractions which formed a barrier of religious teaching. But he faced the most inhospitable of physical conditions, bad roads, and slow, arduous travel. There was considerable opposition to his ministry and very little encouraging sympathy.

This concentration of energy did not mean a letting up with such a man as Mr. Hall. On March 10, 1756, we find him writing to the S.P.G. that he went to the Southern parts and he had "performed all the duties of his mission," though he had ten days of illness in the time and he had had two or three relapses before Christmas. However, this did not confine him for long.

On December 30 he lost his house by fire, which destroyed all his books,

sermons, clothes, and necessities. The Society took pity on the poor missionary and granted Mr. Hall the sum of £30 toward his relief and a new library.

In January 1758, Hall wrote commending Governor Dobbs for his efforts to induce the Assembly to make provision of an adequate sort for an orthodox ministry. He hoped the Assembly would not delay.

The "Act for making better provisions for the clergy" was passed on November 23, 1758, but Hall could reap no benefits. In January, Hall died after a ministry of intense and unflagging service. The Church of St. Paul's, Edenton, was not used for worship until more than a year after his death.

The abstract of the S.P.G. which recorded Mr. Hall's death contains an expression of gratitude and admiration. "It is no excessive computation that this good and most laborious Missionary baptized Ten Thousand persons from his first entrance in his mission in 1743 to the time of his death when he left a wife and 6 children in distress, but in very narrow circumstances."

Clement Hall was the author of several pamphlets and books on religious subjects. A number of these were published in New Bern and it is believed that he was the first North Carolina author.

From a history of St. Paul's Church we find that he was one of the most devout and earnest of the missionaries of the S.P.G. to labor in North Carolina. Had there been many men of the stamp of Clement Hall the fortunes of the Church would have been far different from what they really were.

Main Sources Consulted

Hall, Clement. A Collection of Many Christian Experiences. Edited by William Powell. Raleigh, 1961.

Pennington, Edgar Legare. The Church of England and the Rev. Clement Hall in Colonial North Carolina. Hartford, Conn., 1937.

THE EARLY CHURCH IN THE CAROLINAS AND

CLEMENT HALL, MISSIONARY TO NORTH CAROLINA

Ruth Watson

If we go back to the beginning of the Church of England in the Carolinas we find the first explorers landed on an island off the coast of North Carolina in 1584, stayed several months, and returned to England saying that "the natives treated them well and in fact two natives returned to England with them." Because of their favorable reports, Sir Walter Raleigh sponsored another voyage of explorers with the intent toward colonization, and they sailed into Ocracoke Inlet and Pamlico Sound in 1585. This time the relations with the Indians were unpleasant, supplies ran low, and they were glad to leave when Sir Francis Drake rescued them after they had been there about one year. With them was a Thomas Hariot, who was eager and worked hard to convert the Indians to Christianity. He might be called the first unofficial missionary to North Carolina. The expedition to Roanoke Island has been dramatized by Paul Green in the "Lost Colony," so that we are familiar with that. Then North Carolina disappears from the records of English history for about four decades.

In the middle of the seventeenth century settlers began to stray into the present boundaries of North Carolina from northern colonies. Some of these were Quakers who found governments too intolerant of their religious beliefs, but probably there were more people looking for better economic conditions. Some of these people undoubtedly were of the Church of England faith.

In 1663 King Charles II granted the Carolinas to the Earl of Clarendon and others. By the charters of 1663 and 1664 there was "the express provision for a religious establishment in accordance with the Ecclesiastical laws of England; . . . and the Lords Proprietors were permitted to grant liberty of conscience and worship." The Colony of Carolina was advertised as advantageous on account of the religious freedom offered. Quakers came in great numbers from Pennsylvania and Ireland. Huguenots settled around Bath.

Development of this area was slow. The Lords Proprietors made bad judgments regarding the location of settlements. There were no deep rivers or harbors for navigation with the outside world. They were not diplomatic or wise in their relations with the Indians or with those people who came searching for religious freedom. They could never really permit settlers freedom of worship or freedom from the obligations to the Church of England. They never intended to divorce church and state. However, they really did little to help establish churches or support ministers. In 1670 a letter from the Colony to a Lord Ashley said, "Pray send us a minister, qualified according to the Church of England and an able Councillor to end controversies amongst us."

Men were sent, but the physical and mental hardships were such that many of them died or returned home within a few months. Some were weak of character, unreliable, but on the other hand the struggles of the missionaries to North Carolina belong to the annals of true American heroism. In no other colony did the ministers have greater obstacles, spiritual, physical, and political. They were cut off from centers of population and far removed from educated men. In 1703, the Reverend Mr. John Blair wrote, "I was obliged to buy a couple of horses one of which was for guide because there is no possibility for a stranger to find his road in that country, for if he once goes astray it's a hazard if he ever finds it again. Besides there are mighty inconveniences in traveling there for the roads are not only deep and difficult to find but there are seven (7) great rivers over which there is no passing except two, one of which the Quakers have a Ferry for their convenience and nobody but themselves have the privilege of it."

The Church of England had a bad time with the Quakers. The missionaries wrote that the Quakers "were numerous, ignorant, proud, ambitious and difficult to govern." They were a sect of radical Protestants, who in coming to the new world carried the doctrine of private judgment in religion to the extreme limit. They thought it was unnecessary to have ministers trained in school as each man is taught by the Holy Spirit and each man makes his own communion with his God. They did not consider baptism, the Lord's Supper, or other rites and ceremonies of the Church important. They declined to take oaths to testify in court and refused to pay tithes to support the established Church of England. One can understand how this group plagued the early missionaries. However, we must remember that in that early Charter of 1663 and 1664 religious freedom had been offered in the Colony. One can understand, too, how there was hostility when pressure was brought on all the people to support the Church of England.

In this setting Clement Hall became one of the most outstanding missionaries. Much of what we know of Mr. Hall has been a result of painstaking research by Dr. William S. Powell, Professor of History at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill. Professor Powell has reproduced Mr. Hall's book and in his introduction he has given us a feeling of the stature and worth of this early churchman. Mr. Hall and his brother moved from England to Perquimans County sometime before 1731, for according to records he owned 104 acres there. Little is known of his family except that his mother lived with him in Chowan County and died in Edenton in 1752. Apparently he became a citizen of some prominence in Perquimans County. He was one of the justices of the peace and it is known that persons holding this office must be "God-fearing men" of ability, courageous for the truth, and a wise judge in hearing cases. He also served as a lay reader for his Church when there was no minister. He married Frances Foster, the daughter of a vestryman, in 1742. In less than a year from his marriage, in 1743, he took definite steps toward study in England for ordination as a priest of the Church of England. Friends, including leaders and officials of the community, drew up a certificate on his behalf, testifying to his "Honour, Diligence and Integrity, and that he is esteemed a true Churchman, and one of very good Repute, Life and Conversation." They referred to his services as Lay Reader in the County and that "Mr. Hall is very desirous of Entering into Holy Orders in the Church of England to

Enable him the more effectually to Propagate the Gospel in North Carolina among the poor, Ignorant People there." They explained that there were only two traveling missionaries in the Colony, which had at least 15,000 white inhabitants. He went to E ngland, was ordained before the end of 1743, and was officially approved as missionary to the four northern counties of North Carolina. He remained in England, studying a bit over eight months, and returning to America in 1744. He settled in Chowan County, where he agreed to serve Edenton and surrounding territory plus the four northern counties. The Vestry of Chowan Parish authorized the purchase and repair of a home about six miles from Edenton and paid him £60 a year to hold services on two out of three Sundays in the Courthouse. St. Paul's Church in Edenton was still, after a number of years, under construction. On the other Sunday Mr. Hall traveled thirty to forty miles to hold services at Thomas Walton's at Katherine Creek and at Knotty Pine Chapel. The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts paid him £50 a year to travel throughout Perquimans, Pasquotank, Currituck, and Chowan counties.

For nearly fifteen years he wrote lengthy reports twice a year, sometimes more often, to the Society telling how he journeyed throughout his vast mission territory twice a year, seldom traveling less than two hundred miles on each trip, and in 1755 he traveled over 2,000 miles. There were chapels at various places but many times the crowds were so great he held services under the trees. His records were destroyed when his house burned but he estimated, shortly before his death, that he had baptized at least 10,000 people during his thirteen years of ministry. Although he was assigned to this area, many times he responded to other requests because he was distressed to "see the harvest so great and the laborers so few." He journeyed as far west as Granville County on at least one occasion, and several times to congregations in Virginia. One of his early reports in 1747 states that he was sometimes "hindered by the Baptists whose teachers told them that infant baptism was unlawful," and in 1748 he reported that "there were no Catholics; and while there were no infidels, too many were weak in their private lives, especially Quakers who were very hostile." In 1755 in a report "he humbly begged the Society to consider his age and his former services to appoint him Parochial minister to the Parish of St. Paul's." His health was failing but it was not until 1757 that he was allowed to settle down to serve a single parish. Little is known of his family and he rarely mentioned them by name in his reports. In 1752 he wrote that there were nine in his family and mentioned three infant daughters "for whose Christian Education and Good Life, I am under a deep concern in this remote and irreligious part of the Christian world."

Among Mr. Hall's contributions to North Carolina was the writing of a book, published in 1753. It has the distinction of being the first book published in North Carolina written by a citizen of the territory. There is now only one copy, which is in the Rare Book Room of Duke University Library, entitled A Collection of Many Christian Experiences and Several Places of Scripture Improved. Probably other copies of the book were destroyed in the fire which burned his house, books, sermons, records, and clothes. Hall explains in the Introduction that he wrote "as he journeyed about the Parish as a means of keeping his thoughts employed on good things. He hoped it

would be of some use to others who have leisure to pursue it instead of drinking, gambling, or telling of an idle or slanderous tale." It is in three parts. In the first part, there are questions and paraphrases from the books of the Bible; in the second part, there are proverbs, many of which Mr. Hall himself wrote, and the last part includes adaptations from the Book of Common Prayer for Services. Since there were very few religious publications in the colony, Mr. Hall took this means of offering the people various forms of services. He was an avid reader and kept begging the Missionary Society for books and other reading material, not only for himself but for the people. We know his home and library burned in 1755 and in 1756 he began building a new house, buying property and building material in Edenton with the proceeds from the sale of his 104 acres of land in Perquimans County. In 1758 the Society presented him with a new library to make up in a small way for the loss of a lifetime of collection.

His periods of ill health were mentioned, beginning in 1748, and in 1752 he wrote, "I have reason to believe my Health and Constitution is much impaired and Broken by reason of my Continued Labours in my Offices and also from the Injurious treatment I have often received from the adversaries of our Church and Constitution, for which I do, and pray God to forgive them and turn their hearts."

He died in January 1759. The exact date or cause is unknown. Apparently it was after January 14, for on that date it is recorded that he purchased shoes for some of his slaves. He had worried about his family, for he had debts and owned very little material wealth. His loss from the fire amounted to at least six years' salary. After the estate was settled his family, a wife and six children, received a few shillings, about one month's salary. It was said they were "not quite in distress but in very narrow circumstances." The Reverend Mr. David Earl, teaching school in Edenton, probably conducted his funeral service at St. Paul's Church, which was still not entirely completed. During the restoration of St. Paul's in recent years, a grave was found under the chancel, almost due west of the Gospel end of the altar. This may be Clement Hall's.

Throughout his life, we realize, he was a vigorous but humble man, very concerned about the spiritual welfare of the people, continually wishing he could do more to bring the Gospel to them in a simple, direct way which they could understand and follow.

Main Sources Consulted

Hall, Clement. A Collection of Many Christian Experiences. Edited by William Powell. Raleigh, 1961.

Pennington, Edgar Legare. The Church of England and the Rev. Clement Hall in Colonial North Carolina. Hartford, Conn., 1937.

JOHN STARK RAVENSCROFT, FIRST BISHOP OF NORTH CAROLINA

Anne Moore

John Stark Ravenscroft was the first Bishop of North Carolina and the twentieth in the succession of the American Episcopate. In discussing Ravenscroft it seems appropriate to go back in history to examine the roots of the Episcopal Church in North Carolina.

The territory now embraced within our state holds the distinction of being the cradle of the Anglican Church in America, coming even before Jamestown. For in 1584 Queen Elizabeth, in authorizing Sir Walter Raleigh to colonize the new world in her name, also said that no laws should be passed that hampered the "true Christian faith now professed in the Church of England." The first baptism under the authority of the Church of England was on Roanoke Island when Manteo, the Hatorash Indian, was converted to Christianity and baptized in August 1587. The infant Virginia Dare was baptized a few days later. The first permanent foothold for the Church was in Jamestown, Virginia, in 1607.

It was almost one hundred years later before any efforts were made to spread the Anglican doctrines throughout the scattered settlements of Albemarle in the northern division of Carolina. In the early charters granted by the King to the Lord Proprietors of North Carolina, the Church of England was legally recognized but religious freedom was also guaranteed. In those days parishes were laid out and taxes for the Church were collected from both dissenters and churchmen. The Church made little progress and a large part of this was because it was established by law. Great progress did not come until separation of church and state during the American Revolution. Prior to that time the province of North Carolina was under the episcopal jurisdiction of the Lord Bishop of London, and missionaries were sent to this country by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. The Church of England never permitted the consecration of any bishop for work in America, and both clergy and laity felt this was a real problem. One obvious disadvantage was that confirmation was limited to those who could go to England. Church members who had not been confirmed were usually admitted to Holy Communion under a rubrical provision.

The first efforts to form a Diocese of North Carolina presided over by its own bishop were made by clergymen between 1790 and 1794, but it was more than twenty-five years later before this effort succeeded. The first person elected to be Bishop of North Carolina was Charles Pettigrew in 1794, but he died in 1807 without having been consecrated. The American Episcopate was begun in 1784 when Samuel Seabury was consecrated Bishop of Connecticut in Scotland, followed in 1787 by the consecration of Bishop William White, Pennsylvania, and Bishop Samuel Provoost, New York.

With this as background, let us now consider John Stark Ravenscroft the man and his contributions to the Episcopal Church. He is recognized as having been a strong power for promoting the spread of Christianity throughout

North Carolina and in addition "under his influence were raised up at least five future Bishops and innumerable other clergy." He is credited with "gathering up the remnants of the Church of England in North Carolina and transmitting its doctrines unimpaired to future times." He was known as the most unconventional person in the House of Bishops in his time and as a militant High Churchman who led a life full of self-sacrifice. Ravenscroft discharged his duties with "indomitable energy and unflagging devotion" and has been called a preacher without rival. His entire ministry covered only thirteen years, "yet, so strong and vivid was his personality, so deeply rooted his convictions, so definite his faith, so untiring his labors, that he left behind him an impress and influence which continue to this day."

Ravenscroft was born May 17, 1772, in Prince George County, Virginia, of English descent and into a family of some wealth and high social position. His father was a physician who took his family back to England when Ravenscroft was less than a year old. He died eight years later, and John Stark Ravenscroft lived in England until he was sixteen, during which time he received "fine academic training" in Scotland and northern England. He returned to America to see what could be saved from his father's estate, as it had been mismanaged by the lawyer responsible for it. Nevertheless, the family had still been left in good circumstances. Ravenscroft reached Virginia on January 1, 1789, and decided to entrust his business affairs to a guardian. He received a liberal allowance and soon became addicted to the "fashionable sins of his day, though no more than usual with young men of his station in life." Ravenscroft entered William and Mary to study law and while there had the nickname of "Mad Jack" because of the vehemence of his temper, speech, and manner. His wild ways continued after he left college. He later told one of the clergy of North Carolina that his wild past had given him one advantage over other clergy, and that one being that he had first-hand experience with sinners and wickedness.

At age twenty-one, on September 29, 1792, he was married to Anne Spotswood Burwell, a beautiful, intelligent, and moral woman who had a very good influence over Ravenscroft. She died in 1814 and he later remarried. After his marriage he purchased an estate of 2,500 acres in Lunenburg County, Virginia, close to his wife's home, and led the life of a country gentlemen for many years. He was a highly respected and successful man. However, he had no religious life and later told that between 1792 and 1810 he attended church only six times and did not open a Bible the entire time. In 1810 he began to have serious concern about his past life and the "judgement to come." He termed his passionate and impatient temper and his swearing as his worst sins. As he rode about his large plantation the struggle began within him and his soul began to awaken. After numerous attempts and many failures at beginning a new life, one night following much weeping and prayer he committed himself to the Lord.

Ravenscroft and his wife began to look for a Christian denomination with which to affiliate and joined the Republican Methodist Church, principally because of his feelings for one of its ministers. He began as a lay elder and actively participated in that body for three years. Also, Ravenscroft

began to consider entering the ministry and one problem that he had with making that decision was "the contempt for the calling itself manifested by wealthier and better informed classes of society." Then he began to question "whether the ministry of every Christian denomination was valid and authorized by the Scriptures," especially to administer the sacraments. After careful study and thought he decided that there must be an "outward delegation of authority from that source to which it was originally committed" as well as an "internal call" for those who became ministers. He left the Republican Methodist sect on friendly terms and began to look for another denomination. He decided on the Episcopal Church, the main reason being the unbroken line of the Episcopate of the Church of England from which the American Episcopate had been established.

Ravenscroft applied for orders to Bishop R. C. Moore of Virginia and was first licensed as a lay reader. He worked in two parishes, and after one year became a deacon, on April 25, 1817. Ravenscroft was ordained a few days later, on May 6, at the age of forty-five, and became rector of St. James Church in Mecklenburg County, Virginia. There he made a remarkable record, never failing to keep appointments or hold services in all kinds of weather, no matter how severe. Sometimes no parishioners could get there, but always he would. While Ravenscroft was at St. James, a new church was built and the congregation grew. In 1823 he was asked to be the Assistant Rector of the Monumental Church of Richmond. Ravenscroft accepted, but before he could move he was called to be the Bishop of North Carolina.

Earlier in this paper reference was made to the election of Charles Pettigrew in 1794 as the first bishop. However, that effort at establishing a diocese never culminated and the Church was dormant in North Carolina until 1817. Things had reached an all-time low the year before, when there was not one Episcopal clergymen in North Carolina. A convention was held in April 1817 at which three clergymen and six lay persons were present. Conventions were held each year after that. There were twenty-five parishes, composed of eight clergy and 430 communicants, in April 1823, when Ravenscroft was elected Bishop. He had had only six years' parochial experience. In an emotion-packed moment he accepted the call when it was delivered by the Reverend Mr. Green, saying that he saw the hand of God in this decision, and with God's help he would do His calling.

John Stark Ravenscroft was consecrated on May 22, 1823, in Philadelphia, and all who attended commented on the sincerity and zeal which were apparent in him at the service. The condition of the Diocese was characterized as being low in numbers, and therefore poor. The Diocese could not pay enough to support the Bishop--only $750 a year--so it was arranged that he would also be rector of Christ Church, Raleigh.

Bishop Ravenscroft was warmly welcomed to Raleigh, as this excerpt from the Raleigh newspaper of July 18, 1823, will attest: "He is, as every man ought to be who ministers in holy things for the spiritual edification of his fellow beings, a zealous advocate for what he conceives to be the doctrines of the Gospel. His style is plain, perspicuous, and impressive, his voice clear and distinct, and his action natural and becoming. From all we

have seen and heard, we have no doubt but the Bishop will greatly aid, both by his preaching and example, the cause of religion in this place." Under his leadership Christ Church grew and prospered, building its first church, a wooden building, on what is its present location. Ravenscroft served in this dual role until March 1828, at which point he moved to Granville County.

A description of Ravenscroft's physical appearance calls him "a man of lofty presence with an eye piercing and full of command." He was a little over six feet tall, weighed 220 pounds, and usually had a severe expression on his face but also had a sweet smile. He had heavy and overhanging eyebrows which he called his "dormer windows." He was outspoken and open and frank about all things.

There are many anecdotes that give insight into his personality, with several of the most interesting being as follows.

Once, at a dinner party, another guest was obviously telling about some occurrence in a grossly exaggerated way and everyone was polite, saying nothing, when suddenly Ravenscroft slammed his hand on the table and said, "That, sir, is a lie and you know it."

Another time, at a service he was conducting, the Bishop had begun the Creed and observed that the congregation was not really repeating it with him. He stopped, looked at the congregation, and declared: "Brethren, am I in the midst of heathens or Christians? Can it be possible that there is no man or woman present who believes in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth?" Then he began again, and, needless to say, the congregation really joined in this time.

In contrast, at another parish, when the Sunday School classes were brought in to be questioned in the catechism by the Bishop, they were trembling in fear in the presence of such a person as the Bishop. Taking note of this, Ravenscroft spoke in such a kind and gentle manner that they were immediately reassured. Also, Ravenscroft was termed by some as the "St. Paul of the South."

As Bishop, just as when he was a priest, his activity and zeal were second to none. Weather never stopped him. During a time when transportation was primitive, he traveled extensively over his Diocese, five hundred miles in size, and also worked in Tennessee. At each place he would proclaim the Gospel, baptize, confirm, and sometimes consecrate churches. He loved those clergy under him and often spoke of them as his children. In return, he was loved by them. North Carolina churchmen under him were noted for the care and pains bestowed upon the religious education of slaves.

Ravenscroft was always firm in his belief that "an Episcopate with an unbroken succession was an absolute necessity to constitute an apostolic Church" and was "essential to the validity of the Sacraments." He also felt that the Bible could not be profitably studied without intelligent instruction. The Bishop was very fierce in his denunciation of sin and "never used soft phrases with which to coax his hearers into the paths of righteousness." His fierce and sometimes ungovernable temper was always

of great concern to him, and Ravenscroft always took any criticism concerning it very meekly. He once said that he had many pardons to ask of God and of his fellowman for his harshness of manner toward people, but that there was no harshness in his heart, with his love for his fellowman being second only to his love for God. This was certainly shown in the giving up by Ravenscroft of his life as a successful planter and by his sacrificing both his health and his financial resources in his dedication and zeal to his duties as both a priest and a bishop.

Ravenscroft's life of toil and self-privation had taken its toll, and he was seldom a well man for any length of time after he became bishop. However, he would never stay in bed long enough to really get well, as he always felt he had to be up again to continue his service to God. Ravenscroft wrote his mother in September 1828 that "the effects of the climate, with the fatigue, exposure, and mental labor inseparable from my office in the Church, have made an infirm old man of me in my 57th year." The death on January 15, 1829, of his second wife, Sarah Buford, whom he he married in 1818, was a severe blow that worsened his already poor condition.

Ravenscroft had planned to move to Fayetteville after his wife's death but first accepted an invitation to spend a few months in Raleigh. There he died on March 5, 1830, not quite 58 years old. Knowing his death was imminent, the Bishop prepared for it in a very systematic way. Having received permission from the Vestry of Christ Church to be buried beneath the chancel, he gave careful directions concerning how the work was to be done and purchased the brick to be used. In addition, Ravenscroft gave instructions about the funeral, which he wanted to be simple and with no funeral sermon. The Bishop was greatly mourned throughout the Diocese, especially by the parishioners of Christ Church. At the convention of the Diocese held in May 1830, shortly after his death, the Committee on the State of the Church, in writing about Ravenscroft's contributions, said in part: "Within this Episcopate every altar has been enlarged and its votaries increased. Under his spiritual guidance many wanderers have been gathered into the fold of salvation, and multitudes who were famishing for the pure fountains, have drunk and been satisfied."

Thus ended the life of a man whose influence on both this Diocese and on the Episcopal Church was indeed profound.

Main Source Consulted

Haywood, Marshall DeLancey. Lives of the Bishops of North Carolina. Raleigh, 1910.

WILLIAM WEST SKILES

Ethel Reade

The missionary we will focus our attention on today is William West Skiles, missionary in Western North Carolina from 1842 to 1862.

My chief source of reference is a little book entitled Missionary Life at Valle Crucis. Material for this book was provided by six prominent clergymen, contemporaries of the Reverend Mr. Skiles in the Diocese of North Carolina and by Mr. George N. Evans, a friend and fellow worker. The book was written in compliance with a request made by Bishop Atkinson and was edited by Susan Fenimore Cooper in 1890.

If you think we have problems in the Church today, you should have lived in the Diocese of North Carolina between the years 1842 and 1862. I think some of the problems facing the Church then are somewhat relevant to the problems we are facing today, so I would like to take a few minutes to make you aware of or to refresh your memory on some of the theological issues facing the Church at that time, nationally as well as in the Diocese of North Carolina. The way William Skiles faced the problems he encountered as a result of these controversies has been an inspiration to me, and so I am most happy to share with you some of the events of his life.

In 1830, in the Diocese of North Carolina, there were eleven clergymen and thirty-one congregations, most of which were concentrated in the eastern part of the state. There was just one diocese. The Reverend Mr. Levi Silliman Ives, Rector of St. Luke's Church in New York City, had just been consecrated Bishop.

In England, the Oxford Movement was under way. This movement was initiated by a group of Oxford University scholars. They were critical of the Church of England. They emphasized the importance of piety and the Catholic doctrine. They were most anxious to make people aware of the social needs of the day. More than anything else, they were rebelling against complacency in the Church. They used a series of little tracts to publicize their ideas. As a result, they became known as Tractarians. Basically, the Tractarians believed in the One Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church that dated from the beginning of the early Church. They regarded the Eucharist as the most important service of worship and thought it should be celebrated daily. They thought the sacraments were being considered lightly and that attention should be focused on them by placing candles and an altar cloth on the altar. Their view was that though one might confess directly to God, there were people who might benefit from auricular confession and consider priestly absolution necessary for the forgiveness of sins. The Tractarians thought the Reformation was a complete loss of time.

At first, there was little objection in the United States to the principles of the Tractarians. But later, the Evangelicals began rejecting their ideas. They said that daily communion resembled Roman Catholic daily

mass, that calling the communion table "altar" approached the Romish notion of sacrifice of the mass, and if a priest were necessary for the celebration of the sacrament, then Christ was bound to the whims of the priest. They opposed candles and colored cloths upon the altar, for this called undue attention to the sacraments.

As the Evangelicals became more and more critical of the Tractarians, the Tractarians became more extreme in their views, until they were advocating auricular confession to the exclusion of general confession in the worship service, or through direct confession to God. Reaction begat reaction. What was originally a difference of emphasis became a serious debate upon theological issues.

One of the results of the impact of the tracts in America was the return of monastic orders to the Episcopal Church.

Around 1840, a botanist from New York visited the mountains of western North Carolina, looking for rare plants. He followed the Blue Ridge down into the valley of the Watauga River. He was charmed with the beauty of the country and became intensely interested in the very poor but simple, kindly, and honest people living in the cabins in the backwood mountains. Upon his return to New York, our traveler told Bishop Ives of his trip and of the religious need of the mountain people who lived in his Diocese.

Bishop Ives became so interested in this report that he decided on his next visit to become acquainted with some of the people living in the area of the Watauga. He agreed so heartily with what our traveler had said that he decided to propose that the area be made the chief missionary center for the Diocese. Encouraged by several prominent clergymen and laymen, he purchased a little valley to which he gave the name Valle Crucis. The valley included 125 acres of level land and was bought for $1,500. Later additional land was purchased, amounting in all to 2,000 acres. The mission station was to be a training school for the ministry, a classical, and an agricultural school for boys. Funds received from the agricultural school were to be used for the foundation.

In August 1844, contracts were let for clearing the land and for building a sawmill, a log kitchen, a dining room of adobe, a dwelling house, and a frame building 60 x 18, containing a schoolroom on the ground floor, beneath which was a basement, walled and floored with brick. This was afterwards excavated the whole length of the building, through the hillside, and was used as a chapel. The story above the schoolroom was a dormitory, with rooms for the teachers at one end. Early in 1845 the school opened with thirty boys, the number increasing to fifty during the summer.

The Reverend Mr. Thurston was made head of the mission and director of the school. He was assisted by seven candidates for the ministry. Mrs. Thurston managed the household affairs, assisted by two experienced women.

The mission covered an area of thirty-five miles in the adjoining mountain section.

The school got off to a very bad start. The building were not finished in time, so the boys were not comfortably housed. But a greater problem arose. Some of the boys had been sent to Valle Crucis as to a reformatory. Some excellent boys were in the school, but the misconduct of others became so great that they had to be expelled.

The women became discouraged and resigned. Mr. Thurston died. Many of the boys left, and the school closed.

However, it was not long before the school reopened, and Mr. Jarvis Buxton, a candidate for Holy Orders, was placed in charge. This was a happy choice. The school was soon functioning successfully. The theological students continued their studies, and the missionary work was carried on by the Reverend Mr. Proust.

At this time it was decided that an experienced farmer was needed to assume responsibility for the agricultural department. William West Skiles was hired to fill this position. He was born October 12, 1807, at Hertford, North Carolina. He attended a neighborhood school and was considered honest, industrious, and with a strong sense of duty. Before coming to Valle Crucis he served as an overseer of extensive lumber mills near Plymouth.

At the mission, Mr. Skiles made a strong impression on everyone he met. "Simple, earnest, and peculiarly kindly in countenance and manner, there was something winning about him which attracted a warm regard from his companions, while his uprightness, sound practical judgment, his skill and experience, soon placed him at the head of the Agricultural Department. Gradually, as his efficiency and fidelity became more and more apparent, one duty after another was allotted him, until the labors of head farmer, storekeeper, postmaster, treasurer and general superintendent devolved upon him."

The religious atmosphere of the mission made a deep impression on Mr. Skiles. Almost immediately he told the clergyman in charge that he would like to devote his life to the ministry. Soon he began his studies. He was one of the first students to profit by the Canon of the General Convention allowing admission of a deacon without classical education.

"In the summer, after his own private devotions, long before the sun was up, you would find Mr. Skiles out attending to some special duty--keeping an eye on the hayfield, the crops, the cattle, the orchards--for the farm furnished food for the Mission family."

As the sun rose, a bugle would call the mission family to early prayers. Since there was no rector at Valle Crucis, one of the divinity students would officiate. Mr. Skiles could always be found in his accustomed place regardless of the urgent work that might need attention. His earnest devotion and natural goodness commanded the respect of the younger students. In his countenance there was always the strength of good sense, blended with a glow of kindly feeling.

After breakfast Mr. Skiles again began his numerous duties, seeing to various business details; attending the store, selling cattle, sheep and lumber. He handled all the funds of the institution, though he generally attended to this at night. Dinner was served at noon. At five in the afternoon there were evening prayers, from which Mr. Skiles was never absent unless it was absolutely necessary, nor did he neglect his studies for the preparation for the ministry. In 1844, two years after he began his studies, he completed all the requirements and was ordained Deacon. "He entered quietly and simply upon his religious duties without giving up any of his secular responsibilities."

Although there was no rector at Valle Crucis at this time, religious services were carried on daily at sunrise, noon, and regular morning and evening prayer. The Reverend Mr. Prout, the missionary for the area, officiated three Sundays in the month in the basement chapel and administered Holy Communion once a month. There were three principal missionary stations beyond Valle Crucis--Upper Watauga, Lower Watauga, and Little River. Services were held in homes and school houses and a Day School was established. There were eight divinity students and all assumed some responsibility for mission work. Mr. Skiles began mission work at some of the outlying stations, reading morning prayer, catechizing, and occasionally preaching. He also had charge of the office where medical supplies were kept and was constantly being called on for medicine and advice and assistance in nursing. In order to be better prepared for this task, he ordered books related to the common diseases of the region, and studied them carefully.

While there were many prejudices among the mountain people, the mission work beyond Valle Crucis was flourishing. But at Valle Crucis itself tragic things were beginning to happen. The foundations of the buildings were made of burnt brick, but other parts of the buildings were made of adobe, with the intention of later covering them with stucco. This never was done, and the buildings soon began crumbling away. Bumblebees took possession of them, boring into the fresh clay, until the walls looked like honeycombs. The decay of these buildings was very rapid, yet they had been built at very great expense. Reluctantly, they closed the classical school for boys (1847), and Valle Crucis served only as a missionary center and seminary. The store was closed, and goods on hand were sold at cost, and in some cases given to the poor.

Bishop Ives, who had been rector of St. Luke's Church in New York during the time of the Oxford Movement, was very sympathetic to the Tractarian point of view. At this time (1847) the Evangelicals were getting the upper hand of the Tractarians. A group of young clergymen, who were pro-Tractarians and were not particularly welcomed in New York and were finding it difficult to get jobs, appealed to Bishop Ives for help. They were especially interested in founding a monastic order and wanted to come under the charge of Bishop Ives.

This was the opportunity Bishop Ives had been waiting for. His one great passion seems to have been to follow in the footsteps of Bishop Hobart and Bishop Kemper, pro-Tractarian friends who had founded a monastic order in New York.

Bishop Ives, during his visit to Valle Crucis in 1847, decided to convert the mission into a monastic order, the Order of the Holy Cross. The Order was to be associated with the Divinity School. Bishop Ives was a Ceneral of the Order and the Reverend Mr. French, a young pro-Tractarian friend, was appointed Superior of the Order. Many of the divinity students joined the Order, as did Mr. Skiles.

It is unknown if the Diocese, at this time, knew if the Order had been founded or for what purpose. At the Diocesan Convention of 1848 no complaints were made. In fact the Committee on the State of the Church seemed to be pleased with what was going on at Valle Crucis. After all, it was training seminary students for $50 a year, excluding clothing.

Because of a severe illness, which lasted two months, Bishop Ives could not attend the convention. This illness was said by his physician to have weakened his whole system, and in some measure to have destroyed the healthful balance of his mind. From that date there appeared in manner, in words, and in action, a peculiar inconsistency and vacillation which was noticed by all who had dealings with him. This condition of the Bishop caused much agitation and anxiety in the Diocese.

By the 1849 Convention this agitation had become very serious. This in part reflected the agitation taking place in the National Church. Bishop Ives did not want to compromise his pro-Tractarian beliefs, but he also wanted to keep peace in his own Diocese.

While the mission work at Valle Crucis continued to expand, rumblings were beginning to be heard in the Diocese about what was happening there. At the 1849 Convention, Bishop Ives reported, "For the quieting of some minds disturbed by the unfounded rumors, I beg the Diocese to be assured that, at this religious house, no doctrine will be taught or practice allowed which is not in accordance with the principles and usages of our branch of the Holy Catholic Church."

The Bishop was again ill, but he sent a short charge to be read to this Convention, in which he said that he did not hold that the Prayer Book considered auricular confession as necessary to salvation, and that the only private confessional authorized was in unusual circumstances--in which the confession might or might not be accompanied by priestly absolution.

The convention members were greatly relieved by this message from the Bishop and they voted to have 6,000 copies of the charge printed and distributed throughout the Diocese.

This convention met in May. In July of the same year Bishop Ives again visited Valle rucis, remaining there a month. During this time he wrote a long pastoral letter to the Diocese. Among other things, he lashed out at the Committee on the State of the Church, which he said had behaved presumptuously, he denied there was any agitation in the Diocese, and asserted that auricular confession was acceptable to the doctrine and practices of the Episcopal Church, completely reversing his earlier stand.

Of course this caused even greater agitation in the Diocese. Difficulties at Valle Crucis also increased. Support in the way of funds stopped almost entirely.

From this period on, the ministerial work of Mr. Skiles increased steadily. "Through religious agitation and pecuniary embarrassment he moved steadily on . . . prudent and faithful to every trust; patient, tolerant and full of the spirit of charity."

During this time a chapel at Upper Watauga was completed and deeded to the Church. Father Skiles, as he was now called in deference to his gray hair and beard, gave it the name of Easter Chapel. In the summer of 1852 Bishop Ives came to Upper Watauga to consecrate the church. This was his last official act in North Carolina.

In 1852 Bishop Ives asked for an advance in salary of $1,000 and a six-month leave of absence, to enable him to travel for the benefit of his health as well as for that of Mrs. Ives. This was immediately granted. On Christmas Day of the same year Bishop Ives renounced the Episcopal Church and made submission to the Pope, delivering up to him his pectoral cross and diocesan signet ring, and entered the Roman Catholic Church as a layman. The effect of this on the Diocese was not as great as one might think. The clergy remained firm in their allegiance to the Church.

Dr. Thomas Atkinson, rector of Grace Church, Baltimore, was elected Bishop of the Diocese of North Carolina on May 28, 1853.

Mr. Skiles, who was alone now at Valle Crucis, faced many difficulties. It was understood that the title of the property at Valle Crucis was in the name of the Church; however, this was a mistaken impression. The property, which was heavily in debt, was sold, both land and stock, by a representative of Dr. Ives to Robert Miller. Mr. Miller was very kind to Father Skiles, allowing him to make his home in the little office at the mission, and gave him meals without charge. He also gave him a horse and several cows. The cows were lent to various families where there was sickness or young children.

In the summer of 1853, Mr. George Evans, a layman from Lenoir, came to work with Father Skiles. Mr. Miller gave him a front room with a fireplace and an adjoining bedroom, both comfortably furnished. All this for $3.00 a month!

At this time Father Skiles, with the help of Mr. Evans, taught a class of white children every Sunday morning and adults and colored children every Sunday afternoon. He often rode ten, fifteen, or twenty miles over snow-covered mountains to visit a sick person. He was considered a safe doctor in the ordinary diseases found in the mountain regions. He was often called on to conduct Sunday services. This was a request he never refused if he could possibly grant it. He was considered a good preacher. His sermons were plain, short, and to the point, and they were usually taken from printed material recommended to him by experienced clergymen. At this time his pay was raised by the Diocese to $150 per year.

To supplement his salary and at the request of his neighbors, Father Skiles opened a subscription school. Classes were held in the Library. Father Skiles always managed to combine religion with his secular teaching.

When school was over he went to his office. People came to consult with him on practically everything--family problems, division of household goods, legal papers to be read and interpreted, and letters of all kinds to be written. On matters relating to stock and farming he was considered an expert.

"All this was done simply, quietly. Father Skiles was unconscious of his own value. He was one of the most humble of men." He seemed to act instinctively on each call of duty regardless of how small, or how important, it was.

In the summer of 1854, Bishop Atkinson made his first visitation to Valle Crucis. He became very much interested in Mr. Skiles and his work. This increased with every visitation.

Bishop Atkinson did not visit the Watauga region again until 1862. The one object of his visitation was to consecrate the little church at Lower Watauga, which was entirely finished and free of debt, St. John the Baptist. This was the little church Father Skiles had planned and started building in 1859. With the help of some architectural designs and with the advice of more experienced friends, he was able to plan a pleasing building, simple but church-like.

The entire cost of the completed church was $700, of which more than a third was given by the missionary. It was Father Skiles's wish that the church should have stained-glass windows. This wish was granted. Mr. Sharp, of New York, sent the windows at a reduced price. Mr. Evans gave $40 toward the cost.

The 22nd of August, 1862, must have been a happy day for Father Skiles. On that day the beautiful Consecration service was conducted by Bishop Atkinson. How heartily Father Skiles must have joined in the prayer of dedication:

> Vouchsafe, O Lord, to be present with us, who are here gathered together with all humility and readiness of heart, to consecrate this place to the honor of Thy great Name; separating it henceforth from all unhallowed, ordinary, and common uses; and dedicating it to Thy service, to reading Thy holy Word, for celebrating Thy holy Sacraments, for offering to Thy glorious Majesty the sacrifices of prayer and Thanksgiving, for blessing Thy people in Thy Name, and for the performance of all other holy offices: accept, O Lord, this service to our hands, and bless it with such success as may tend most to Thy Glory, and the furtherance of our happiness both temporal and spiritual; through Jesus Christ our blessed Lord and Savior.

This was the last time Father Skiles entered the church of St. John the Baptist. His health was failing and he went to live in the home of Colonel Palmer. Colonel Palmer had accepted the command of a regiment in the Confederate army and wanted someone to stay with his wife and nieces while he was away. Father Skiles did not want to go in his feeble condition, but he finally decided to do so.

His health became rapidly worse. He was too ill to hold services or to visit the sick, and his suffering was very severe. The nearest physician lived at Morganton, thirty miles away. He came to see Father Skiles twice, but the medicine he gave him could give no relief.

No man or woman in the region could be found who was capable of nursing Father Skiles, and Mrs. Palmer became his nurse, remaining in his room much of the time, doing all that she could to relieve his suffering.

Father Skiles neither complained nor murmured, and when Mrs. Palmer expressed surprise at his remarkable patience he replied he was only sorry for the trouble he gave her.

Father Skiles died on December 8, 1862. It was impossible to send to Morganton for a coffin, and he was buried in a rough box made by a neighbor, in the garden near the house. But this was not his last resting place. When the ice melted the Reverend Mr. Wetmore, a dear friend, made arrangements to have his body removed to St. John the Baptist. Father Skiles was buried on the south side of the church, beneath a white pine, a laurel, and an oak.

Main Source Consulted

Cooper, Susan Fenimore, ed. William West Skiles. New York, 1890.

THOMAS ATKINSON

Laura Graham (Mrs. A. H.)

Thomas Atkinson, the third Bishop of North Carolina, is said to have been one of the finest of all the men who have been leaders of the Church in the United States. He served during some of the most difficult years in the history of our country--the years of the War Between the States and the years of Reconstruction which followed.

Atkinson came from a family that had been well established in this country for over one hundred years. His grandfather, Roger Atkinson, came to Virginia from Cumberland, England, about 1750 and settled on an estate called Mansfield in Dinwiddie County. He was a staunch member of the Church of England, served on the Vestry of Bristol Parish for many years, and worshiped at Old Blandford Church in Petersburg. His son, Robert, and his wife, Mary Tabb Mayo, had eleven children, one of whom was Thomas Atkinson, born August 6, 1807, at Mansfield. Growing up in such a large and busy household gave Atkinson a deep feeling of family devotion, and he remained close to his many brothers and sisters all through his life.

He went first to Yale, but remained there briefly. While there he was ordered to give the names of fellow students who had broken some rules. This he refused to do, and so he left Yale and went to Hampden-Sydney, where he was graduated with honors at the age of eighteen. After reading law with Judge Henry St. George Tucker and practicing for eight years, he realized that this was not what he wanted to do. It was then that he began studying for the ministry and in 1837 he was ordained by the Right Reverend Richard Channing Moore. He had been married about the time he received his law license to Josepha Gwinn Wilder, of Petersburg, and they became the parents of one daughter and two sons. One of his sons was married twice and the other three times, and both of them had quite a few children. Thus, there are many descendants of Thomas Atkinson living in various parts of the country today.

After his ordination, Atkinson served as rector of churches in Norfolk, Lynchburg, and Baltimore. It was during these early days of his ministry that he studied the Prayer Book diligently. It disturbed him that the Church in the United States made no observation of the Saints' Days and minor festivals, and it was he who was primarily responsible for the first observances of these days in this country.

During the first fifteen years of his ministry, Thomas Atkinson's reputation as a strong, intelligent Christian leader grew throughout the country. He was twice called to be Bishop of Indiana and strongly considered by South Carolina. The reason he never held either of these positions was due to his feeling about slavery. Atkinson was strongly opposed to slavery and freed all of his slaves who wanted their freedom. The law at that time stated that slaves could be freed only if they went to live in the free states. Some of his slaves did not want to go, and he felt an obligation to keep them and look after them rather than sell them. He was told by a close friend that to go to Indiana as a slave-owner would put him in an

unbearable position. When he was being considered by South Carolina he was asked how he felt on the subject. Atkinson replied that he felt slavery wrong, but he could not see how to get rid of it. If it came to a choice between slavery and the Union, he declared, he would say let slavery go and preserve the Union of the States. After this answer, he was not invited to become Bishop of South Carolina. "So," he said many years later, "I was not Bishop of Indiana because I was not sufficiently opposed to slavery; and I was not Bishop of South Carolina because I was not sufficiently in favor of it." This, I think, is a good example of the kind of man he was--always loyal to his own conscience, he acted upon his true convictions regardless of the outcome to himself.

During this period the Church in the South was having its troubles. Bishop Cheshire, in his book The Church in the Confederate States, wrote: "In all the Southern States the character, social antecedents, intelligence and wealth of [the Church's] members assured it of public consideration far out of proportion to its numerical strength." In the entire South there were only 175 clergymen and fewer than 10,000 communicants. In North Carolina, Bishop Ives, who had followed Bishop Ravenscroft, had accomplished some worthwhile things. He had established Valle Crucis, the mountain mission that was an agricultural school and a theological seminary; and he had founded St. Mary's School in Raleigh in 1842. However, shortly afterwards he began to drift toward Catholicism. It was said by some that his mind was affected because of a serious illness, but, whatever the cause, in 1852 he openly avowed his conversion to the Church of Rome and left North Carolina. This had a very definite effect on the strength and solidarity of the Church in North Carolina.

In May 1853, Thomas Atkinson was elected Bishop. He was a man who was especially fitted for his time. His unruffled temperament and solid judgment restored the confidence of the communicants and the clergy. Bishop Cheshire said: "His very appearance inspired confidence" and "hope [was] restored and the life of the Diocese went forward under the influence of a calm, earnest, clear-headed, single-hearted leader."

During the next few years the Bishop was active over the entire state. He was particularly interested in the Moravian Community at Salem and visited there several times. His interest was sparked, too, in education and he strongly supported Bishop Polk of Tennessee in the establishment of the University of the South at Sewanee. He preached also to the slaves, a practice he continued throughout the War; and he always encouraged the women of the state in their efforts to educate not only their own young children, but Negro children as well.

As the War came closer and the secession of the Southern states, one by one, became a reality, the position of the Church in the South was of grave concern. The question was: Were these Southern dioceses still a part of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States? Or, as each state seceded from the Union, was the diocese of that state forced to withdraw from the Church of the United States? Atkinson believed that, until the Church itself took some action, the political disunion among the states

in no way disbanded or nullified the existence of the Church of the United States. This view was accepted by some, but not by others. No one really knew the answer, but Atkinson, as always, stood firm in what he believed was right. This was, I believe, the only time during his ministry that there were any misunderstandings and troubled feelings toward him.

In 1862 the Diocese of North Carolina adopted the Constitution of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Confederate States of America. This Church was a short-lived one and operated at all times under the most difficult circumstances. One of the few things it did was to authorize the publishing of the Confederate Prayer Book, and there were only a relatively few of those actually printed.

Although Bishop Atkinson had been in favor of preserving the Union at all costs, when North Carolina seceded he became intensely loyal to the Confederacy. He was deeply interested in attending to the spiritual welfare of the soldiers and he constantly visited the camps, conducting services, comforting the sick and dying, and doing everything possible for the men and boys--often at great danger to himself. As the War went on and Federal forces grew stronger in North Carolina, he moved his family from Wilmington, where he had lived since coming to North Carolina, to Wadesboro, feeling they would be safer there. While he was in Wadesboro, a Northern soldier accosted him, held a cocked pistol to his head, and demanded his watch. Atkinson refused to give it to him. The soldier took the watch as Atkinson stood his ground, but offered no resistance. As Bishop Cheshire said, "To have done so would have been both useless and unseemly--but he would not, for fear, give up his property by his own act. He could be robbed, but he could not be intimidated."

Along with his usual duties and his work among the soldiers, Bishop Atkinson kept on with his work among the Negroes. To them he stressed the idea of Christian brotherhood and certain principles of social order, such as the sanctity of marriage. To his white congregations, he advocated that they not only pay the blacks ungrudgingly for their work, but that they make every effort to befriend and rehabilitate them. During those difficult war years there was a desperate need for money, for homes for orphans and widows and for more hospital care. Repair work was needed on practically all the churches. Indeed, some of them had been deliberately burned or defaced, while others were confiscated to be used for other purposes. Many ministers were subjected to all sorts of harassment, arrest, and even imprisonment--one of the chief bones of contention being the lack of the use of the prayer for the President of the United States at the services. Throughout all these trying times, Bishop Atkinson's steadfast courage and devotion was a never-ending source of strength and comfort to his people. He was always aware that the injustices visited on the Church in North Carolina were carried out by the military and not by the Northern Church--and this he stressed to his congregations, pointing out that there were many Northern individuals who gave monetary contributions and other things to the Southern Churches.

As you know, the War ended in early April of 1865. In July of that

year all the Southern bishops received an invitation from the Presiding Bishop of the Church of the United States to take their seats at the General Convention to be held in October in Philadelphia. This called forth a variety of responses from the various dioceses--laymen and clergy alike. It was far too soon for all feelings of bitterness to have abated. Many Southerners had read the editorial which appeared in Philadelphia in the Episcopal Recorder only three weeks after Lee's surrender--the editorial which demanded that some of the leading bishops and clergy in the South be hanged on the grounds that they had been leaders in the secession movement. Such things as this, plus all the other insults and humiliations were still very much with the people. This atmosphere placed the Southern bishops in a most difficult position. They all realized the necessity for putting aside personal feelings and reacting in a manner that was best for the Church as a whole. And, apparently, they all did view the situation in a true Christian spirit. The trouble lay in the fact that many of them differed in just what the right response to the invitation was. And to compound the problem, although they tried, there was no way in that war-torn land for them to meet and settle the matter together. It resulted that in the states of Florida, Tennessee, Louisiana, and Arkansas the diocesan life had died out so completely that there was no way for a state-wide decision to be made. Texas stuck with its view that they were automatically a part of the Church of the United States.when the Confederacy was dissolved. Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi felt it was too soon and that the South should wait until time had healed some of its wounds. South Carolina wanted to remain separate permanently, and while Virginia's bishop was in favor of accepting, his diocese was not. North Carolina stood alone in taking the stand that the invitation should be accepted, and it proceeded immediately to elect delegates to attend. Bishop Atkinson, whose failing health was a cause of deep concern, declared it was the duty of the Diocese of North Carolina to lead the way in restoring friendly relationships among the people of the United States. The result, then, at the first General Convention after the War, was that there were partial delegations from Tennessee and Texas, the delegates from North Carolina and Bishops Lay and Atkinson representing the entire South. It took a lot of courage for these men to subject themselves to an unknown response--deliberately to walk into what could be an extremely touchy situation. Just before leaving for Philadelphia, Bishop Atkinson said, "The conclusion to which we shall now come is one in which our children and our children's children shall have a deep interest as well as ourselves." Happily for us, the "children's children," the Southerners were warmly welcomed, every courtesy was extended, and the first steps were taken in reuniting the Church.

For the next sixteen years, although his health continued to fail, Thomas Atkinson served the Church, highly honored and respected not only by North Carolinians, but by all who knew him. He attended the first Lambeth Conference in 1867, aided in the establishment of St. Augustine's in 1868, was responsible for the election of North Carolina's first assistant bishop, and put in motion the division of the Diocese of North Carolina, although the latter was not actually accomplished until two years after his death. During his service, the clergy in North Carolina increased from 36 to 76, and the number of communicants more than tripled.

After serving the Episcopate for nearly thirty years, Thomas Atkinson died at his home in Wilmington on January 4, 1881, at the age of 73. He was buried beneath the chancel of St. James Church in Wilmington, as was his wife after her death some years later.

In 1909, the Church of the Holy Comforter in Charlotte was built as a memorial to Thomas Atkinson. I know of no better way to close than to quote a part of what Bishop Strange said at the laying of the cornerstone of that church.

> We needed a wise and loving leader then; and the good God gave him to us. How noble his presence, how gracious his manners, how loving his heart, how firm his will, how wise his judgment! . . . He was with us, our true friend and guide in the stormy times of war and in the dark days of reconstruction. To him, more than to any single man, is due the fact that the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States is today one, knowing no North and South, no East and West.

Main Sources Consulted

Bell, Landon C. Cumberland Parish, Lunenberg Co. Va. 1746-1816. Richmond, 1930.

Cheshire, Joseph Blount. The Church in the Confederate States. New York, 1914.

Haywood, Marshall DeLancey. Lives of the Bishops of North Carolina. Raleigh, 1910.

Meade, Bishop William. Old Churches, Ministers and Families of Virginia. 2 vols. Philadelphia, n.d.

MISSIONARIES TO THEIR OWN COMMUNITIES

FRANCIS J. MURDOCH AND SAMUEL S. NASH

Julia Royall

It has been both fascinating and inspiring to read about the lives of two great churchmen--the Reverend Mr. Francis Johnston Murdoch and Mr. Samuel Simpson Nash. The former was a great minister and also outstanding businessman, and the latter was a great businessman and outstanding lay minister. Their lives paralleled in many ways, as we will soon see. Both lived during and after the Civil War, and both were dynamic forces in the life of the Church and the life of their communities. One phrase describes them both to me: "Men filled with Christian Missionary Zeal."

The Reverend Mr. Francis Murdoch was born in Buncombe County near Asheville on March 17, 1846, fourth son and tenth child of William and Margaret Murdoch, natives of Ireland, but of Scottish blood. His family first lived as emigrants in Pennsylvania, but after two years (in 1845) they moved near Asheville. Francis Murdoch's father was a prominent farmer and dealer in fine cattle. He is recorded in history as the first man to import fine cattle to this country. Murdoch was reared amid rural scenes in which he learned the lessons of industry, economy, integrity, and perseverance, characteristics he held throughout his life.

As a youth he attended Col. Stephen Lee's (Mary Lee Cunningham's ancestor) school in Asheville. As a lad of 15 he enlisted in the famous First N.C. Volunteers (known as the Bethel Regiment) and he served until 1861. He was graduated with distinction from the Citadel in Charleston, S.C. After teaching in Dr. Buxton's school in Asheville, he continued his studies for the ministry under the Reverend Mr. Buxton and on September 17, 1868, he was ordained deacon at St. Luke's, Salisbury, by Bishop Atkinson and assigned to mission work at High Shoals and other stations in Western North Carolina. He was ordained to the priesthood by Bishop Atkinson in 1870, and two years later he became rector of St. Luke's, Salisbury, where he served for 37 years. New life and great progress were imparted to St. Luke's by Dr. Murdoch. In the first five years of his ministry there were over one hundred baptisms and one hundred confirmations--doubling the size of the congregation.

Under his vigorous policy of expansion, the following parishes were organized or revitalized: St. Mary's, China Grove, and All Saints, Concord. Church services were held at Mocksville, St. Jude's, Locke's Township, St. Paul's, Chestnut Hill, St. Peter's Chapel, St. John's Chapel, St. George's Chapel, St. Moses', St. Cuthbert's, and with the help and cooperation of the large-hearted philanthropist and devoted churchman, Mr. W. A. Erwin, Good Shepherd at Cooleemee. To quote Bishop Cheshire, "Dr. Murdoch was the pioneer of 'Parochial Missions' in this section of the country and organized the 'Evangelist Brotherhood' consisting of two other priests. These missions have become one of our regular methods of church work. True dedication and brilliant preaching made this work successful."

Dr. Murdoch was a great teacher of young men and it is generally considered that the most striking aspect of his life was the discovery and training and developing of the ministers of the Gospel. He ran a small theological school where people "read" theology with him as they used to "read" law. Sidney Bost, our former minister, worked with him before coming to St. Philip's. As a matter of interest, Dr. Murdoch preached the first sermon delivered at our present church building. Dr. Murdoch had a large and extensive library. About twenty men were brought into the ministry through his efforts. In 1890 the University of the South conferred upon him the degree of Doctor of Sacred Theology.

Dr. Murdoch was a member of the General Convention for twenty years, a Clerical trustee of the University of the South since 1884, a trustee of St. Mary's since it was placed in the hands of the Diocese. He served as one of the Examining Chaplains and Chairman of a special church building committee to try to improve the design of churches throughout the state.

In the difficult Reconstruction time he realized the needs of the people around him and spared no pains to serve them. To provide work he organized the Salisbury Cotton Mills and the Rowan Knitting Company. Of these he was Secretary and Treasurer. He was President of the Vance Cotton Mills and the Yadkin Falls Manufacturing Company, and secretary-treasurer of a building and loan association. He was also instrumental in bringing the first electric power company to Salisbury. He was interested in education and was secretary and examiner of the Salisbury graded school.

In 1884 Dr. Murdoch married Miss Eliza Marsh. More than sixty years of Mrs. Murdoch's life were devoted to the Church as organist, choir member, Sunday School teacher, and Bible Class teacher. Her support of her husband's missions prolonged the effectiveness of his work. They had two children--a boy and a girl.

Dr. Murdoch felt strongly that the Anglo-Saxons, by virtue of their world-wide power and influence--power that was rivaled during this period only by that of Russia and Turkey--had an obligation, almost a divine injunction, to spread the Gospel by means of the Church.

Habitually meditative--his reserve of manner hid a tender and loving heart, a deep emotional nature. The Diocese has never produced a more gifted or intellectual man. He would have made a great bishop. It is of historic interest that Mr. Murdoch nominated Mr. Cheshire for bishop and Mr. Cheshire nominated Mr. Murdoch. Mr. Murdoch's support of Mr. Cheshire insured Mr. Cheshire's election by only one vote.

Mr. Murdoch was classified as one of the three most remarkable men of North Carolina of his day. He was a brilliant scholar. Bishop Cheshire says, "He was the most original, suggestive and helpful expositor of the Scripture whom I have ever heard."

In a tribute to Mr. Murdoch it was written, "He was a blessing to his community temporally as well as spiritually. He was not only an able and eloquent divine but a sapient businessman and financier and a lucid and classical writer and possessed a superabundance of energy and enterprise."

After his death in 1910 the Francis J. Murdoch Society was organized to help seminary students. This is still ongoing, and the funds are administered by Lewis Connor, of Raleigh.

* * * * * * *

To quote the Reverend Mr. Theodore Partrick, Jr., editor of Carolina Churchman and father of our own Louise Partrick Newton, "When an individual becomes an institution and in his own time, there is an interesting story to be told." He was speaking of Samuel Simpson Nash.

Scion of one of North Carolina's most distinguished families, great-grandson of one of its governors (Abner Nash), grandson of one of its chief justices (Frederick Nash), son of Henry Nash, he was born in Hillsborough in 1848 and educated in local private schools. Because of his youth he was turned down when he tried to join the Confederate Army from Orange County, but he finally succeeded and served with the Army of Northern Virginia. He was captured and remained in prison until the end of the war. After prison his physical appearance was so changed from privations, his own mother did not recognize him when he walked up on her porch.

He lived in Wilmington for a short time, where he was a clerk at the Wilmington and Manchester Railroad; later he moved permanently to Tarboro. In 1878 he married Annie Gray Cheshire, daughter of the Reverend Mr. Joseph Blount Cheshire. They had six children: Elizabeth (Mrs. Henry Johnson); Pembroke Nash; Arabelle (Mrs. Albert Cox); Annie Gray (Mrs. J. Lawrence Sprunt--first married to Allen Jones Ruffin); Cheshire Nash; and Sam Nash. For nearly twenty years he conducted one of the leading mercantile establishments. He was a cotton buyer, Secretary-Treasurer of Edgecombe Homestead and Loan Association, member of the graded school board, and Treasurer of Edgecombe County for four years.

Mr. Nash was a devoted member of Calvary Church but gave freely of his time to the lay ministry throughout Edgecombe County. Three missions, each having separate recognition from Calvary Church, owe their organization to him. Calvary Church Parish is more like a missionary diocese than a parish. The center of this activity was Mr. Nash, an humble yet marvelously effective disciple of Christ. He was in charge of one church for forty-six years, and he established two others: he served one church for thirty-nine years, the other for twenty years. He has given each of them loving care and visited them each Sunday. In the horse-and-buggy days he held three services in the county each Sunday; in automotive days he held four services. He also held intense active interest in the social and economic welfare in these communities. He was a friend and father confessor to these people. They loved him because he first loved them. He gave them pastoral care in success and trouble, in addition to giving them advice and money.

Much of what Mr. Nash accomplished was made possible by the cooperation of associated clerical and lay men and women. The long list of organists,

teachers, priests, etc. is but another tribute to the man and his profound love of God and his fellowman. They responded to his great faith with great faith and followed where he led. Some of the outstanding laymen who worked with Mr. Nash were Mr. Henry Bourne, Mr. H. G. Nicholson, Mr. Don Gilliam, Mr. J. E. Services, and Mr. Frank Hart.

How and why did Mr. Nash begin his mission work? He first took the responsibility for a mission ten miles from Tarboro which had been started by a young girl who had attended and been confirmed at St. Mary's School in Raleigh, and returned home where there was no Episcopal Church. She began a Sunday School class in the Grange Hall, and it had been so successful she needed help. Mr. Nash responded and came to "St. Mary's Chapel" every Sunday except for five, for the next forty-six years. An offspring of this mission was born in 1891, when several young girls who had attended Sunday School at "St. Mary's Chapel" moved to another community five miles away. On Easter 1891 Mr. Nash received a letter from them asking him to start some work there. On the following Sunday he held a Sunday School class in a hall over a country store. Grace Memorial Church at Lawrence evolved from this. Mr. Nash went there every Sunday after he attended "St. Mary's Chapel." Grace Memorial flourished, and in 1894 a beautiful chapel was built, part of which was a memorial to Eliza Battle Pittman. Miss Kate Cheshire, sister of the bishop, carved the altar and reredos. Schools were needed in these communities, and Miss Cheshire started a school with her own funds on the church grounds.

At a funeral in Grace Chapel in 1910, Mr. Nash saw a large group of men, many of whom were strangers to him. Mr. Nash, being a very friendly man, inquired about them and was told they came from a very remote backwoods section. He found there existed a real need among them for a Sunday school class and service. So a class was started at once in a barn. An acre of ground was given and the chapel building began within a year. It became the thriving congregation of St. Matthew's (named for Mr. Nash's home church in Hillsborough). It was a backwoods community made up mostly of tenant farmers, a shifting and underprivileged group. The instability of the population made mission work difficult, but it had some good effects. It has sent Episcopalians to other communities where they have added strength. One of its sons went to Seminary. It also always had good confirmation classes.

One archdeacon, Mr. Duncan, visited St. Matthew's. When he and Mr. Nash left for the twelve-mile drive from Tarboro, it was dark, bitter cold, and snowing and sleeting--a very dangerous night to be out. Mr. Duncan said he saw no reason to go. "Surely no one would be there." Mr. Nash insisted they go. When they arrived, the place was filled. Mr. Duncan said, "No wonder they love him; he never disappoints them. They can count on him."

Mr. Nash was Inspector General on the staff of the United Confederate Veterans. He supported the cause of needy Confederate soldiers and widows.

Mr. Nash's final illness, pneumonia, came just after he had returned to Tarboro from the Diocesan Convention. Several days before his death he answered a call from a young woman out in the county to visit her dying child.

He baptized the child. The "Bishop of Edgecombe," as Mr. Nash was fondly called, died at the age of 82.

One of his missions was taken over by the manager of the local telephone company who had never done this type of work before. He developed a marvelous ability to preach. Another mission was taken over by a young farmer, one of Mr. Nash's 347 godsons, who had gone to agricultural college and had come home to revolutionize farming. He now combined Christian work with farm work.

Mr. Nash fulfilled the command "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel."

* * * * * * *

When one thinks of the Reverend Mr. Francis J. Murdoch and Mr. Samuel S. Nash, one is reminded of the hymn: "Rise up ye men of God, have done with lesser things. Give heart and soul and mind and strength to serve the King of Kings."

Let us pray that the Lord will raise up more men (and women) like Mr. Murdoch and Mr. Nash who will lead us to greater deeds.

Main Sources Consulted

Henderson, Archibald. History of St. Luke's Parish. N.p., n.d. 34pp.

North Carolina Churchman. Scattered issues between 1910 and 1930.

Powell, William. St. Luke's 1753-1953. Salisbury, 1953.

Spirit of Missions. v. 95 (1930).

BISHOP JOSEPH BLOUNT CHESHIRE, D.D. (1850-1932)

Priscilla McBryde (Mrs. A. H.)

For much of the information and data in this paper I am greatly indebted to the biography of Bishop Cheshire written by Dr. Lawrence London, Historiographer of the Diocese of North Carolina and a distinguished churchman. The book was published in Chapel Hill in 1941 and bears a Foreword by Bishop Edwin A. Penick, who succeeded Bishop Cheshire as Bishop of the Diocese of North Carolina.

Another published source was the book of anecdotes and stories, "Nonnulla," written by Bishop Cheshire himself. These stories, impossible to recount, tell much of the very human and delightfully humorous character of the man and his wide circle of friends from all walks of life. In fact, Bishop Cheshire's life was rich in varied experiences and impressive in its accomplishments but withal displayed a genuine love for and understanding of people and a sincere dedication to his calling. Many of us at St. Philip's were confirmed by Bishop Cheshire and recall his visits to our homes as was his wont after the Confirmation Service.

I think I can best picture this man for you with a capsulated story of his life and the influences that helped to shape and mould his character.

Dr. London writes: "As very young boys, my brothers and I were fond of looking at him [the Bishop] for with his flowing white beard and rather stocky figure, he appeared the very embodiment of Santa Claus!" But to me, as a little girl, looking up at him standing beside the high altar in St. Philip's Church, in his voluminous, simple but beautiful bishop's robes (I never saw him that I remember with staff or mitre), he was so impressive that I thought he must look like God!

Joseph Blount Cheshire was born in 1850 to the Reverend Mr. John Cheshire and Elizabeth Parker Cheshire, of Tarboro. His father was rector of Calvary Church there for over fifty years, having entered the ministry after a brief fling at law. Dr. Cheshire is best remembered for his work in helping to heal the breach between the northern and southern branches of the Episcopal Church, urging that the Diocese of North Carolina send delegates to the first post-Civil War General Convention, which was to be held in Philadelphia in 1865. His clear reasoning prevailed and he was elected one of the deputies to that historic Convention.

The Parker-Cheshire house, as it is called, housed a large and lively family at that time--Joseph's mother and father, his grandmother, an aunt, two cousins, and eventually five brothers and sisters! This happy household may have contributed to the development of Joseph's characteristics of tolerance and unselfishness.

Like many boys of his day, his schooling began at home, taught by his mother until he was nine years old. His more formal education began when he was eleven and he entered the Tarboro Male Academy, where thirty to thirty-five boys of all ages, from beginners to college preparatory, were taught by one

teacher! Because his family summered in Monreath, he lost two months of school each year, so at age fourteen he asked permission of his father to attend the Louisburg school--walking four miles a day each way to "conjugate Latin verbs and pursue the classical curriculum of the day!"

His religious training also started at home, where every Sunday afternoon all the children, black and white, gathered around his mother to learn and recite the Catechism. But not until his first year in college was he confirmed.

Although his boyhood was during the Civil War years, the Cheshire family suffered little serious privation. Later he observed, "It is strange that almost all my memories of those tragical days seem to be of bright and happy experiences. I do not remember any atmosphere of gloom or depression. The spirit of all was brave and buoyant." This tells us something of the character and faith of his parents.

By age fifteen he was ready for college, but money was scarce and his father did not think the University of North Carolina the best place for a fifteen-year-old boy, who would be thrown in with a good many young men fresh from careless army life! Instead, his father chose Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut, a fine, small, church-related school. So we see this young man of sixteen traveling north to enter a strange school among people with whom less than a year before his people had been at war! However, he was treated kindly and made many friends. Money was always a problem and had it not been for the intervention of an anonymous benefactor who advanced money for his board, he would have had to return home. (Probably the loan came from his roommate's father, but in any event the debt was fully repaid the next year by Dr. Cheshire.) In college Joseph was not an outstanding student or big campus leader, but he did very well and was President of his senior class.

Following graduation in 1869 (nineteen years old), he tried teaching Latin and Greek in a boy's school in Maryland, but after two years decided to give up teaching and take up law. He studied under the eminent lawyer William K. Ruffin for a summer and for three months in Judge Howard's office, and received his license after a very superficial oral examination. He started practice in Baltimore, found it dull, and came home to Tarboro to go into practice with Col. John Bridgers and his son. At the same time he accepted two business jobs keeping books, which he carried along with his law practice.

In spite of this feverish activity and movement, he found time to court his cousin Annie Huske Webb, of Hillsborough, whom he duly married after a two-year engagement, when he felt he was financially able to support a family. They were married in St. Matthew's Church, Hillsborough, and although Joseph was not of a particularly romantic nature, he thought his wife the most beautiful of women and they happily set up housekeeping in Tarboro.

By 1876 Joseph was growing increasingly unhappy with the practice of law, summing up his feelings with this unadorned statement: "I made a

living and saved a few hundred dollars. I had no very interesting or important cases as far as I can recall." He had been fighting a growing desire to become a candidate for Holy Orders until he had become successful in what he was doing--he would not enter the ministry as a failure from another field of work. His early life, his varied experiences and his marriage, however, gave him a rich background for the work that lay ahead.

Now he was ready, and began preparing himself, following a course of study laid out by Bishop Thomas Atkinson, who had discouraged his going to the General Seminary because of its emphasis on ritual. In less than two years he had passed his examination and presented himself for ordination to the diaconate.

When Dr. Kemp Battle, President of the University of North Carolina, heard that Joseph was studying for the ministry, he asked Bishop Atkinson to send him to Chapel Hill. The University had survived the rough post-Civil War days but the Chapel of the Cross had fallen into decay and had no regular minister. Also there was need for some missionary work in the fast-growing town of Durham not many miles away. These were tremendous tasks for a young man just starting out, but he accepted the Bishop's appointment and soon had settled his family in the little four-room parish rectory on Rosemary Lane--incidentally assuming a small debt remaining on this house although his salary was to be only $500 a year! In spite of some deprivation, he wrote later that his years in Chapel Hill were "as happy, I believe, as possible in this world!" Here his second child was born as well as his lifelong passion and interest in mission work.

For his little flock in Durham, he rented an entertainment hall on Main Street and there he held services on the first Sunday of every month--often walking the twelve miles from Chapel Hill! When the need of a church building was apparent, a lot on Main Street was purchased at a very low price because of its undesirability from a business point of view--too far out of town--and in 1880 the foundation for a frame church was laid. That his congregation could bear only a small part of the cost of building was no deterrent to Deacon Cheshire. His family and friends contributed one-quarter of the total cost and he did not hesitate to ask some of the larger churches to give one Sunday's offering. There were gifts from fellow townspeople in Durham and each gift, even one as small as fifty cents, was meticulously entered in a book now in the archives of St. Philip's. The money was raised and the church built at a total cost of $2,500. Mr. Cheshire named the church St. Philip, the Deacon, feeling it to be the fruit of his work as a Deacon. It was with much pride and happiness that he assisted Bishop Lyman in the consecration of St. Philip's Church, Durham, on July 24, 1881.

In spite of the effort and hours spent, this work with the Durham mission was without pay except for the small amounts that the mission sent him now and then. But Bishop Cheshire wrote, "I did not look upon work outside the parish as extra work for which I should receive extra remuneration or special commendation," when returning a $25 check once sent by the Diocesan treasurer. Rather, he looked upon his labor here as a pure work of love and he later recalled, "I believe I worked harder and with more enthusiasm in my mission of St. Philip's, Durham, and afterwards in establishing St. Mark's, Mecklenburg . . . than in any other work I ever undertook."

In 1880, he was ordained priest at St. Paul's, Winston. In love with his work in Chapel Hill, he declined all calls until one came from St. Matthew's, Hillsborough, his wife's home. But Bishop Lyman requested him to remain in Chapel Hill, where he was doing a good job. Subsequently, a call came from St. Peter's, Charlotte, which he declined, thinking he knew what his Bishop would say. However, Bishop Lyman, hearing of this call, notified him that he would see that the call was extended again and he wished him to accept! This was an opportunity for larger service, and the Bishop knew Joseph Cheshire was ready.

He embarked upon this new work if not with confidence in his own ability, with the determination to give it his best. His salary was to be the munificent sum of $1,200, so he borrowed $1,000, used his savings, and bought a house on North Church Street; he felt he had been raised to a position of affluence. When some of his friends told him he was taking on one of the hardest and most undesirable parishes in the Diocese, it was a discouraging description. But after serving twelve years there, he remarked that "he had found nothing which would justify such a characterization of the parish."

St. Peter's at that time had 137 communicants and by the end of three months he was pretty well acquainted with most of his parishioners and had been in their homes. Then he began reaching out beyond the parish into the community and surrounding towns. When he resigned his rectorate in 1893 to become Bishop Coadjutor of the Diocese, he left a record difficult to match for any future rector, as well as a host of friends in all walks of life, within and outside of the Church. With tireless effort and enthusiasm he truly shaped the role of the Episcopal Church in that area. Some of his accomplishments stand out--he organized St. Martin's parish, established St. Michael's and All Angels Mission for Negroes, St. Mark's Mission in Mecklenburg, and St. Paul's Mission in Monroe. He sponsored the building of St. Peter's and Good Samaritan Hospitals and assisted Mr. Osborne in establishing Thompson Orphanage as a Diocesan Institution. He was active in Diocesan affairs and a leader in creating the Diocese of East Carolina in the face of some opposition by Bishop Lyman. If, at times, his own parishioners demurred at so much outside activity, St. Peter's membership increased from 137 members to 263, and they loyally supported his endeavors with enthusiasm and financial help.

So it was on this high note of achievement that this phase of his ministry ended and a larger field of service opened up to him.

In 1893, the Diocesan Convention met in Christ Church, Raleigh, to elect an Assistant Bishop. What an election that was--one of the longest in memory! The Assistant, or Coadjutor, was to receive a salary of $2,500 and to succeed Bishop Lyman, now in failing health. There were many candidates, among them Mr. Cheshire and Dr. Francis Murdoch, also a prominent clergyman. Mr. Cheshire nominated Dr. Murdoch, and Dr. Murdoch nominated Mr. Cheshire--and they proved to be the two most important candidates.

Under the rules of the Convention, twenty-nine, or two-thirds, of the clergy vote was necessary for election--a number no candidate received

through the twenty-fourth ballot. At this point, Mr. Cheshire, many times close to being elected, as was Dr. Murdoch, asked to be excused as he had promised to officiate at the wedding of a friend in Randolph County. He left the Convention, not to return. The next morning balloting continued until after the thirty-eighth ballot it was moved that the clergy retire for prayer and conference! It seems a small majority of clergy did not favor any candidate from within the Diocese and yet they could not agree on a candidate from outside. Finally, they agreed to support either Dr. Murdoch or Mr. Cheshire, whoever received a majority of votes in the conference. When the ballots were counted, Mr. Cheshire had won by one vote!

The clergy returned to the hall and on the next, the thirty-ninth, ballot, Mr. Cheshire was elected. The laity quickly confirmed, and someone was dispatched to take the news to a surprised Mr. Cheshire, who had spent the night in High Point after the wedding festivities. Almost everywhere his election was received with enthusiasm and Dr. Murdoch was most generous in his remarks: "I have not one misgiving . . . I say now as I said when I nominated him, we have made no mistake."

Joseph Cheshire was consecrated Bishop in Calvary Church, Tarboro, and the little town was taxed to take care of the many people who came to do him honor. Only the fact of his father's ill health, which kept him from attending the service, marred the occasion.

So started a new life for the Cheshires, now a sizable family of three boys and three girls. Just two months later Dr. Lyman died, and Bishop Cheshire assumed sole responsibility for guidance of the Diocese. Sustained by a strong faith and a determination to work hard to fulfill the duties of his office, he quickly set the tone and standard for his Episcopate.

He was a blunt and forthright man and, as Bishop, he felt it his duty to exercise the full authority of his office. If some clergy and laymen thought him a bit despotic, he commanded respect for his ability and fairness and quick admission if he found himself in error. He tried to be indeed the pastor of his flock and he deplored the growing tendency for the bishop to be simply an administrator of ecclesiastical affairs. He was a strict adherent to the rubrics of the Prayer Book, for which he had great reverence, and had little patience with those who tried to alter the order of service. He was not above giving sound advice in his pastoral letter on how a service should be conducted--points on kneeling posture, audible responses, and not over-decorating the church to "gratify the vanity of men and women." He was known to stop an organist and choir in the middle of an anthem or hymn if the tune was too difficult or too flowery! He advised against the widely used "Preaching Lent," saying that in his opinion, few clergymen were capable of preaching good sermons for forty consecutive days; and he felt few congregations desired them; for those who seemed to, he suggested a change would have a salutary effect.

Characteristically, he urged the clergy to keep their records in order--something most clergy hated to do and neglected often. He also stressed three basic concepts of the Church structure and work: (1) the Diocese rather than the parish as the unit of the Church, (2) the necessity of supporting the diocesan institutions, and (3) the need for continuing and

expanding the missionary work of the Diocese. Time and again he expounded these basics, until clergy and laity alike caught some of the fire of his enthusiasm and translated his ideas into living reality.

One of his first projects was to revive the old Valle Crucis Mission, and in three years an eight-room mission house had been built and a school established to train teachers and preachers for work among the mountain folk. This led to his conviction that the western part of the state should be a separate diocese. At his request a missionary district, called the Jurisdiction of Asheville, was created by the General Convention of 1898 and the Reverend Mr. Junius Horner was elected by the House of Bishops to this office.

One of the most important achievements of his long Episcopate was the establishment of St. Mary's School as a Church institution. St. Mary's did not always belong to the Diocese, although its two rectors had been Episcopal clergymen. When the school fell on hard times because of the competition of publicly supported and privately endowed schools, the Alumnae Association appealed to the Diocese for help. Help was forthcoming. Through loyal support and the personal efforts of Bishop Cheshire, who visited throughout the Diocese in the school's behalf, sufficient money was raised, a tract of land bought, both the Eastern and Western dioceses brought into representation on the Board, and St. Mary's School was placed on a permanent foundation as an institution "under the 'charge and patronage' of the Episcopal Church throughout the State." Renewed interest and publicity caused an immediate upswing in the enrollment, and in a comparatively short time St. Mary's was to become the largest Episcopal school for girls in the United States.

As Bishop, he interested himself in all phases of the Church's life and in social problems of the state, though he never permitted himself or his clergy to be drawn into controversial affairs. Twice he spoke out strongly against liberalization of the divorce laws--believing that there was only one true, valid reason for divorce--adultery. Again he spoke out against prohibition, deploring excessive drinking, but feeling sure that coercing states into outlawing liquor would never work (North Carolina had already passed a state law outlawing liquor).

Throughout his parish ministry and as Bishop, he struggled with the racial problem within the Church. The post-bellum Episcopal Church permitted black participation on a diocesan level, but practiced segregation in its parishes. In the late nineteenth century even this was offensive to some Southerners. But Bishop Cheshire was a staunch friend of the blacks and labored diligently to bring them into the Church. However, he was brought up in a family owning a few slaves, and was greatly influenced by the example and teaching of his father and of Bishop Atkinson, who imbued him with a sense of "paternalistic concern" for blacks, not equality, and, paradoxically, a belief in the inherent unity of the Episcopal Church. Mr. Gaines Foster, author of an article appearing in the North Carolina Historical Review entitled "Bishop Cheshire and Black Participation in the Episcopal Church: The Limitations of Religious Paternalism," sums up the Bishop's philosophy in this manner: "[H]e fiercely defended the black

man's full participation in the hierarchy of the Church. While in the meeting, the black man had full rights--even to good seats. But when black/white relations returned to the domain of society, blacks had no right to equality." And, "[H]is actions reflected the best aspects of the Old South's paternalism, but just as surely exposed its limitations in a world of black freedom." This whole difficult problem of human relations in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century was so close to the agony of Civil War that at least the Episcopal Church was ahead of its sister churches in that the unity of the Church was saved and mission work among the blacks was flourishing. The Bishop appointed a black man as Archdeacon in charge "of missionary work to the colored people" and his support was a great help to the progress and growth of St. Augustine's College. Always he was a trusted friend of the blacks.

At the end of ten years, at a gathering at Good Shepherd Church, Raleigh, in 1903, his report showed that he had held 4,000 services, 4,400 persons had been confirmed, 1,400 sermons had been preached, 27 chapels and churches had been consecrated, and 27 clergymen ordained!

He never had a secretary until toward the end of his life, preferring to write his letters in longhand--and he kept a record of each letter. According to his records, he wrote during his Episcopate 66,778 letters!

This Bishop, a man of so many accomplishments, was also an exceptionally interesting person. He loved hunting and fishing, carrying his tackle in his car as he traveled the Diocese, often stopping to cast a line into an inviting pool or stream. He also enjoyed a reputation as a raconteur of rare charm. His best anecdotes were of his hunting and fishing experiences and companions, and are found in a book he published called Nonnulla. He had a hearty laugh, enjoying his own as well as others' stories. His sermons were less scintillating, as he was no orator, and he preached as if he were talking to a group of friends--unadorned, straightforward expositions of religious truths with a Bible text. He once remarked to a clergyman, "Because a man is not converted to Christ through my teaching and preaching, I do not on that account consider that he has rejected Christ. He has only rejected my presentation of Christ."

All in all, Episcopalians loved their Bishop as a man, a vital, interesting personality who possessed none of the pompousness of the commonplace ecclesiastic. As Nell Battle Lewis, journalist, once aptly characterized him, "[M]uch more than a Churchman, able Churchman though he is, foremost he is a man, a gentleman of the most unswerving honesty, conviction, courage, kindness, humor, and charm."

His great love of history became a serious avocation and during his busy lifetime he wrote many historical papers, diligently researched, and one of the last offices he held was as President of the North Carolina Literary and Historical Society. He was awarded the degree of Doctor of Divinity by the University of North Carolina for his work both as clergyman and historian, and later he received honorary degrees from the University of the South, Sewanee, and from his alma mater, Trinity College.

In 1922, then 72 years of age, and having served as Bishop of the Diocese for twenty-nine years, he felt he had to ask for help in carrying out his duties. On May 16, at the Church of the Good Shepherd, Raleigh, the Convention elected as Bishop Coadjutor the Reverend Mr. Edwin A. Penick, Rector of St. Peter's, Charlotte--on the sixth ballot. Bishop Cheshire expressed his pleasure: "And never, I make bold to say, did we feel more sure of Divine Presence, Guidance and Blessing, than in the solemn hour of choosing our Bishop Coadjutor. Among the many helpful and happy experiences of my Episcopate, and of my life, I remember that as one of the best."

Planning for his retirement, he built a small apartment for his wife and daughter. Bishop Penick, on finding that there was a debt on the property, raised a purse of $4,273 among friends in the Diocese and presented it to the Bishop at the convention of 1924. This cleared the debt and the Bishop was greatly touched by this generous gift.

In 1929, Mrs. Cheshire died during the Diocesan Convention. This was the first Convention the Bishop had missed since 1876!

On December 11, 1932, he performed his last service--confirming fifteen young people in the Church of the Good Shepherd, Raleigh.

On December 27 he died.

Bishop deWolfe Perry, Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church, spoke these words: "It is impossible to foresee a time when his influence will not be felt, his penetrating mind will not be esteemed or when his name will cease to be held in grateful and loving remembrance."

Main Sources Consulted

Cheshire, Bishop Joseph Blount. Nonnulla. Chapel Hill, 1930.

London, Lawrence. Bishop Cheshire, His Life and Works. Chapel Hill, 1941.

SIDNEY STUART BOST

Phyllis S. Bowman and Harold T. Parker

The Diocesan Report of 1891 foreshadowed a gloomy future for St. Philip's parish. During the previous year several families had moved away and an unusually large number of parishioners had died. Among these were the most liberal contributors to the parish. From 1891 to 1892 there was no rector, and the congregation shrank still more. For the next three years the Reverend Mr. Stewart McQueen and the Reverend Mr. George Zellers kept the parish alive, and the arrival of the cotton mills in 1892 brought new life to the town and new parishioners to St. Philip's. On November 16, 1895, the Reverend Mr. A. A. Pruden became rector of the parish.

Mr. Pruden worked tirelessly to revive the parish, and he became popular in the small town with all classes of people. On Friday nights he conducted services for the mill hands in West Durham to supplement the Sunday School which W. A. Erwin and W. B. LaFar had recently organized in that neighborhood. In East Durham he held the first Anglican service in a drugstore on South Driver Avenue, where Mrs. Eliza Burcham had gathered a small group.

On January 27, 1897, Mr. Pruden married Miss Minnie Happer, the older sister of Mr. W. W. Happer, who until recently was our oldest parishioner at St. Philip's. His Lenten sermons were published in the Durham Daily Sun, and public criticism arose because of St. Philip's extensive press coverage. The Spanish-American War cut short this promising beginning, and in May 1898 Mr. Pruden resigned to be commissioned chaplain in the First North Carolina Regiment.

To carry on the work begun, on May 20, 1898, Sidney Stuart Bost came from Salisbury to become the new rector of St. Philip's. Mr. Bost was born in Rowan County on February 12, 1871, and was named after two Confederate generals. He studied theology under the Reverend Dr. Francis J. Murdoch, who had also tutored Bishop Cheshire. Mr. Bost was ordained deacon by Bishop Lyman in 1892, and on May 31, 1896, he was ordained priest by Bishop Cheshire.

In Durham he found 80 families, 318 baptized persons, 199 communicants. His salary was $908.34. Besides the services at St. Philip's he carried on the services in West Durham on Sunday afternoons in connection with Mr. Erwin's Bible class.

By 1900 he was able to report to the Diocese that he hoped to build a mission in East Durham, and this project was actually completed the following year. Another problem could no longer be ignored. St. Philip's Church, built for two hundred in 1880, was bursting at the seams. Soon after the turn of the century tentative plans were begun to raise money for a new building. The services of the architect Ralph Adams Cram of Boston, called by John Flowers the greatest ecclesiastical architect of his time, were secured, probably through the New England connections of Bishop Cheshire. Since the

vestry records for this period do not exist, we can only guess at the struggle which preceded the completion of our present building, in which the first service was held on the first Sunday in Advent 1907.

In 1905, the Reverend Mr. Thomas Lee Trott became assistant minister at St. Philip's and was assigned to the flourishing work in West Durham. Mr. Bost was able to turn his attention to a special mission, the ministry to the deaf. He was influenced to take on this unusual ministry by Miss Robina Tillinghast, who had come to Durham to teach the deaf. Mr. Bost threw himself wholeheartedly into the work and even learned to "sign." In May 1907 the missionary to the deaf from Baltimore, the Reverend Mr. Oliver J. Whildin, was able to present seventeen deaf people for confirmation. The work was supported in part by funds contributed by Bishop Cheshire. A Sunday school session was held at St. Philip's every Sunday afternoon, but usually the group stayed on for the whole afternoon and regarded this relaxed social encounter as the highlight of their week. Miss Tillinghast started a week-day kindergarten for the deaf children in 1915 "in the mute room of the Parish House," but this was allowed to lapse when she had to resign in January 1917 to return to her parents in South Carolina. At this time Mr. Bost recommended Roma Coxey Fortune, who had been a member of the first deaf confirmation class, as the leader of the deaf group. Mr. Bost thus launched the career of Mr. Fortune which was to bring him to the priesthood and to national prominence as a leader of work for the deaf both in the Church and in the legislatures and law courts. For his own work and for his sponsorship of the work of Mr. Fortune, Mr. Bost was granted the Cross of the Order of Sangreal in 1931.

Two more missionary efforts were begun by Mr. Bost, the first in Holly Springs, where he traveled once a month to hold services, beginning in 1912 and continuing for about three years, when the congregation could be organized on its own. The second brought him special mention in the Diocesan Report of 1932: "Mention must also be made of the work of the Reverend Mr. S. S. Bost and of the women of St. Philip's parish for what they are doing for students at Duke. Through teas and socials many contacts have been made with our Church students there, and in spite of the distance between the college and the church, many students have been attending the services. The organization of a College Students' Auxiliary has been found very helpful." By 1934 he was providing a monthly corporate communion for the students and encouraging them to be active in the choir and in the parish.

He was long a member of the Standing Committee of the Diocese and also chairman of the Diocesan Finance Committee. Many times he was a delegate to the General Convention and he attended the last Pan-Anglican Conference at Lambeth before his death.

Besides his work in the parish and in local missions, Mr. Bost found time to be active in affairs of the growing city. North Carolina had become a dry state in 1909, but in 1914 there was still much illegal liquor in town. The Durham Morning Herald on May 26, 1914, noted that "the Durham Minister's Association, including even Episcopal rector, S. S. Bost, relentlessly threw its weight into the war against liquor on all levels." Perhaps we should explain

the "even." Officially the Roman Catholic Church opposed the Eighteenth Amendment and, while the Episcopal Church took no official stand, it leaned toward Rome. The Reverend Mr. Robert M. Watson says in his M.A. thesis: "The via media between Rome and Geneva of Anglicanism rendered equivocal its stand on prohibition, as on so many other issues, and frequently led to sharp tensions within its ranks." Bishop Cheshire was an outspoken opponent of the evils of liquor but even he did not support the amendment.

On April 22, 1915, Mr. Bost, then 44, married Miss Esther Cowles. A rectory on the east side of Queen Street had been purchased in November 1912, and the vestry was spurred on by the approaching marriage to renovate the rectory to the extent of paper and paint and a new stove. They also gave the newlyweds a mahogany library set as a wedding gift. Two years later, however, we find Mr. Bost having to be firm with the vestry over several meetings to have a much needed new roof put on the house.

When the United States entered World War I in 1917, Mr. Bost was active in the sale of liberty bonds. Speaking in a theater in behalf of bond sales, he called for cooperation of all and asked the audience to conserve food, pay taxes gladly, buy bonds, give unstintingly to good causes, and answer their country's call eagerly and bravely. "Whoever loses his life for righteousness' sake shall find it," he said. "We are making war on war." The following year he headed the Chamber of Commerce gardening committee to promote the planting of war gardens.

At the end of the war Mr. Bost served on a committee of the Durham Ministers Association which tried to get the city to call off a masquerade dance planned to climax the day of welcoming home Durham's Company M and Battery C in April 1919. The ministers opposed such a dance on the grounds that costumes promote licentious behavior. However, fifty of the most respected ladies volunteered to chaperone, and a block of Duke Street was roped off and brightly lighted, and the dance was held.

Throughout the 1920's Mr. Bost was often quoted in the Durham Morning Herald, since he had by then become a respected and prominent leader of the community. He served as chairman of the Red Cross and on the Board of Associated Charities. In 1924-25, he served as president of the local Rotary Club. He was a member of the Public Library Committee. The only church services in Durham upon the death of Woodrow Wilson (February 3, 1924) were held at St. Philip's, although all the churches tolled their bells and a community memorial service was held later at Trinity College with W. T. LaPrade as eulogist. Later that year, when the Scopes trial was making headlines, Mr. Bost tried to calm violent feelings. "He is a foolish man who would hinder and hamper the scientist in his lawful pursuit of all that he can find. But he is equally foolish who accepts for ultimate truth that which is only the creation of the human brain." Mr. Bost felt that if proper Christian spirit had prevailed, the fight could have been prevented.

In one of the interviews, the history committee was told that it had become fashionable even for non-Episcopalians to turn to Mr. Bost for weddings and funerals. We know that on January 2, 1934, he participated in the

reinterment of the body of Dr. Bartlett Durham, for whom Durham was named and who died about 1860. The grave is in Annex B of Maplewood Cemetery, the body having been removed from Orange County.

Mr. Bost died June 7, 1935. Mrs. Wallace E. Seeman served as chairman of the memorial committee, and the Good Shepherd window was installed as the congregation's memorial to their beloved rector. The auxiliary of St. Andrew's gave the credence table as their memorial.

During his tenure the Church had grown to 640 baptized and 438 communicants. His salary had increased from $908 to $2,434.

He was eulogized in the Diocesan report as "Faithful Priest, Diligent Pastor, Wise Counsellor, Loyal Friend," but perhaps the most fitting tribute came in one of our interviews: "He was a regular guy."

Main Sources Consulted

Journal(s) of the . . . Convention of the Diocese of North Carolina.

Watson, Robert M., Jr. "A Religious Profile of Durham, N.C., 1880-1930." Unpublished M.A. thesis. Duke University. Durham, 1964.

Interviews.

THE WORK WITH THE DEAF

Judith H. Pearson

In the world of the deaf, the Episcopal Church has long been recognized as the one which has always been first in the field of church work among the deaf. The first worship service for the deaf was conducted by an Episcopal priest. Dr. Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet, an Episcopalian, founded the first school for the deaf in the United States. His younger son, Edward, founded Gallaudet College, the only college for the deaf in the world. The Episcopal Church was the first to ordain a deaf-mute man, and as late as 1964 was the only church that was willing to do so. Our diocese was the first to build a church, Ephphatha, solely for the use of the deaf.

The mission work was started in the South by the Reverend Mr. Job Turner in 1876. He covered the territory from Maryland to the Gulf and from the Atlantic to Arkansas. After Mr. Turner's death in 1903, the Reverend Mr. O. J. Whildin from Baltimore took over his charge.

The year 1906 may be regarded as the time when definite and organized efforts were begun in the Diocese. The Reverend Mr. O. J. Whildin made his first visit to Durham and held services in St. Philip's Church. After repeated visits he prepared and presented to Bishop Cheshire on May 20, 1906, seventeen persons for confirmation. Mr. Roma C. Fortune was a member of that class, and he later became a lay reader.

Touched by the religious needs of these isolated people, the Reverend Mr. Sydney Bost continued services, assisted by Miss Robina Tillinghast, daughter of deaf parents, as interpreter.

Between 1906 and 1910 the bulk of the work was done by Miss Tillinghast. She conducted Sunday School and Bible Classes each Sunday. Once a month the Reverend Mr. Bost gave them a service with Mr. Roma C. Fortune interpreting the service and Miss Tillinghast the sermon. In the four years the mission grew to forty deaf persons.

In October 1910, St. Philip's was cited by Mr. Bost as the best illustration of what could be done in mission work with the deaf. He proposed that the Diocesan Auxiliary become responsible for half the salary for Miss Tillinghast and that St. Philip's would pay half--each giving $300.

It was planned that she would extend her work to larger towns in the Diocese where deaf-mutes lived and would organize Sunday School and Bible Classes for them. She would prepare them for baptism and confirmation and interpret the services and sermons. By this time Mr. Fortune was conducting the Sunday School classes in Durham. In addition, weekly society meetings were held for literary and social purposes.

In the spring of 1911 Miss Tillinghast began work with the black deaf-mutes. She taught a class of five at St. Titus's in Durham, and under her

direction a class of fourteen in Charlotte was taught "by a very intelligent colored deaf-mute woman." The rest of the classes continued to grow, with Greensboro having twelve members, and eight in Raleigh. In Winston-Salem she had met with five people, and in High Point she had met twice with seven deaf-mutes.

By 1912 Miss Tillinghast's work had grown to include 125 deaf-mutes distributed throughout the Diocese. Her counsel was sought in all matters pertaining to their welfare--problems met in the community, in the education of their children, in caring for the sick, and in earning a living. In explaining her mission Miss Tillinghast said, "They must of necessity have some interpreter between them and the outside world whom they can love and trust to help in the solution of such problems." Mr. Fortune "signed" in Sunday School at a Christmas celebration that year, saying that the mission "benefits us in every way, not only in our business and social life but it helps and inspires us in our religious life."

In 1915 Miss Tillinghast moved to Spartanburg, South Carolina, because she was needed by her parents. For nine years she had worked unceasingly and laid the work on broad, strong foundations. By then the mission in Durham was looked on as being the most prosperous mission to the deaf in the Southern states.

Mr. Roma Fortune, who had become president of the State Deaf Association, was approached and asked to consider prayerfully the matter of being ordained to the ministry. After months of reflection, study, and prayer he resolved to do this. On May 8, 1918, the work among the deaf was crowned when Roma C. Fortune was ordained as Deacon by the Right Reverend Mr. Joseph B. Cheshire.

The Reverend Mr. Bost described the mission in a letter to the Carolina Churchman in 1919 as follows: "The writer has found the deaf liberal contributors to Church work, conscientious in the observance of Church duties and desirous of the highest possible development of themselves and their children." He goes on to describe Mr. Fortune. "Mr. Fortune is an able, conscientious and capable worker, a wise leader, well known to the deaf throughout the state, and trusted wherever he is known."

By 1920 the mission had grown to 290 members and by 1921 a Sunday School class with a leader was operating in Greensboro at St. Andrew's Church. Mr. Fortune was traveling to Burlington, Greensboro, Kannapolis, Winston-Salem, Concord, Charlotte, Selma, Kenly, and Princeton. He also began to visit the Deaf and Mute School at Morganton, and the Deaf and Dumb School for the "colored people" in Raleigh. In the year 1923 he preached to 1,000 persons outside the mission in Durham, which now had sixty members. Monthly he visited the Bible Study class in Burlington, where he held services for eighteen to twenty members.

In 1926 it was reported in the Churchman that it had long been known that Bishop Cheshire had had a special interest in the work being carried on for the deaf in St. Philip's parish. In a list of 1,000 needed things in the Diocese the erection of a church for the deaf numbered twenty-third. Bishop Cheshire was anxious that no time be lost in giving this worthy group a church of their own.

In May 1926, Mr. Fortune in an address to the meeting of the Woman's Auxiliary to the National Council in session at St. Philip's Church, described plans to erect a beautiful and substantial church in Durham. The church would be the center of church life for the deaf in the Diocese. Indications were that the church would attract other deaf mutes to Durham to partake in the finer spiritual life that would be made possible. He related that the deaf church members were elated and felt it would assist them greatly in their church activities.

For the next five years the Diocese put forth great efforts to raise the money for the church. The cost was shared by the entire church family throughout the Diocese. The Women's Auxiliary gave $3,000, $3,000 was raised through special gifts, and $1,000 was given by the deaf mutes themselves. The Advent-Epiphany offerings were designated for this purpose. Added incentive was given to make the church a memorial to Bishop Cheshire.

On January 27, 1927, Roma Fortune was advanced to the priesthood by Bishop Cheshire. James R. Fortune, son of the candidate, interpreted the service and sermon in sign language.

The consecration of Ephphatha Church on May 17, 1931, marked the happy culmination of planning and faithful labor in the erection and furnishing of the only church for the deaf people in the entire South, one of four in the United States. The Reverend Mr. Koehler of Pennsylvania, the oldest minister for the deaf in the United States, preached the sermon in sign language. Mr. Alexander Tillinghast, brother of Miss Robina Tillinghast, acted as interpreter for the hearing. The service included singing of hymns in sign language.

The Reverend Mr. S. S. Bost died June 7, 1935, four years after the consecration of Ephphatha Church. At the Annual Convention Bishop Penick praised Mr. Bost as follows: "I suspect that Mr. Bost's most lasting service to his generation was his personal concern for the deaf people of his community that widened through the years to embrace the great silent parish of the Diocese. It was his sympathetic interest in this afflicted group that introduced and interpreted the Church to them until today the Diocese of North Carolina is nationally conspicuous for its ministry to the deaf. Although there is neither speech nor language, God's voice is heard among them, saying 'Ephphatha, be opened.'"

The deaf mission continued to grow. By means of the automobile more and more of the deaf who lived in remote areas were able to attend services at central points, some traveling as much as fifty miles. In 1938 the Reverend Mr. Fortune reported he had ministered through service and sermon to 1,340 persons outside of Durham and Burlington. There were now two churches for the deaf in the Diocese of North Carolina, the second being St. Athanasius in Burlington. The Church of the Holy Comforter had restored and renovated their old church building and donated it to the deaf in 1936.

In 1942 more than 2,000 deaf mutes across the state suffered the loss of their beloved clergyman. The Reverend Mr. Roma C. Fortune died on October 27, while calling upon a parishioner of Ephphatha. Bishop Penick praised

Mr. Fortune for his unflagging zeal and effectiveness in carrying out his ministry. "We honor him as one of the outstanding pioneers of the Church to our brethren who live in perpetual silence. We never heard the sound of his voice, but we never failed to catch the muted sweetness of his personality and the message of a life that was eloquent above words."

Funeral services were conducted by Bishop Penick and the Reverend Mr. David Yates and given in sign language by James Fortune. The service was described as follows:

> It seemed to us as we beheld the "suffering in silence" that that wonderful service never meant as much to us as at that moment. The choir standing in front of the communion rail facing the congregation "sang" in sign language as Bishop Penick read the hymn. Their graceful movement of arms and figures, with faces rapt in reverent keeping with hearts that had been sorely smitten, produced a silent harmony that caused one's nerves to tingle and made one feel the reality of what their religion meant to them.

After the death of his father, James R. Fortune, already a licensed lay reader, left the dairying industry and set out to receive the necessary training to enable him to become the speaking leader for the deaf so that his father's ministry might be continued. Bishop Penick was instrumental in making James feel the call to serve these people left rather helpless. James explained his decision:

> It was in an interview with Bishop Penick that I realized the vacancy created by my father's death was of real concern to the Bishop. He made me see that the work among the deaf was an integral part of the missionary program of the Diocese.

In the six months between his father's death and the next annual convention James conducted twenty-eight services, preached outside the Diocese once, and presented a paper to the North Carolina Sunday School for the Deaf Convention.

James was ordained Deacon February 22, 1944, and extended his field of mission work to include regular services in the Parish House of Grace Church in Morganton. These services were attended by the deaf in the community as well as the adult students of the school. Afternoon chapel services in the school auditorium were attended by about 300 students, ranging from eight to eighteen years, and by about 30 adults. In addition he made several talks to hearing congregations in Church services and Sunday Schools, making the work among the deaf more widely known in the Diocese.

In 1944 the Diocese provided full scholarships for three deaf persons to attend the Leadership and Teachers Conference. These teachers acted as leaders on the Sundays when Mr. Fortune was not present at their parish. They were from Durham, Greensboro, and Winston-Salem.

The Reverend Mr. James C. Fortune was advanced to the priesthood at

Ephphatha Church on April 13, 1945, making him one of two speaking clergy out of the fifteen in the Episcopal Church doing full-time work among the deaf. One significant thing about the service was that it took two people to do each thing in the service--since the deaf persons present had to be provided with the same words as those who could hear. Mr. Fortune's mother led in the "singing" for the deaf, and his three brothers were ushers. A Ciborium was dedicated as a memorial to Miss Tillinghast during the ordination ceremonies.

St. Philip's held a reception for the visiting clergy following the service. They also had a reception the Wednesday before for the deaf ministers and about 100 guests from Durham, Burlington, and Raleigh.

In 1946 after attending a Conference of Church Workers among the Deaf of the Protestant Episcopal Church of America Mr. Fortune visited New York City and conducted a service at St. Ann's, the first mission for the deaf in the United States. The first Bible Class for adult deaf-mutes was held there in 1849 and from this class the mission work spread across the United States.

In 1947 Mr. Fortune was elected First Vice President of the Conference of Church Workers among the Deaf and in 1951 he was elected President. He held the office for seventeen years.

In 1949 he was elected Vice President of the Board of Directors of the North Carolina State School for the Deaf in Morganton and served on that board until 1961.

Between the years 1946 and 1949 money was collected through the Advent Offerings and used to buy a lot and build a rectory for the Reverend Mr. Fortune--he still resides there today.

In the year 1952, 5,469 deaf persons attended services conducted by Mr. Fortune. In addition to regular services he answered many calls for assistance in counseling, interpreting, and making sick calls--a service which is a very important need of the deaf. He expressed their gratitude to the Diocese for making these services possible. He also continued his effort to educate more people about the Episcopal Church's work among the deaf by speaking to numerous Auxiliary groups and Civic Clubs.

The fiftieth anniversary of the missionary work among the deaf in the Diocese of North Carolina was celebrated in 1956. Six members of the original confirmation class of 1906 were still living and active in Church work. The Bible Classes in Durham, Burlington, Winston-Salem, Greensboro, and Statesville were thriving. Mr. Fortune held services in each of these towns once a month. To accomplish his mission he traveled approximately 22,000 miles a year.

In July 1958, Mr. Fortune began serving as consultant to the Department of Otology at Duke Hospital. Pre-school deaf children are often doubly handicapped through a lack of understanding of their needs by their parents. Mr. Fortune gave the hearing test and educated parents to the special educational methods available, and gave them instruction as to how they might begin the

necessary teaching of their pre-school deaf child. This was a real missionary service of our Church, as the children came to Duke from all over the eastern seaboard. Mr. Fortune expressed it in this manner: "The Church is serving as it has always done, from the cradle to the grave."

The year 1960 saw another first in the field. Beginning February 1, 1960, there was a full-time chaplain to the Episcopal students at Gallaudet College. This was the only full-time chaplain for the deaf students of any denomination. That year the work among the deaf of our Church became a co-operating agency of the Home Department of our National Council. This gave stability to the work through centralization of direction and made available all the resources of the National Council.

Mr. Fortune was appointed as an instructor on the faculty at Duke in 1960 and continued to do specialized audiological testing at Duke Hospital and Murdoch. He served as chairman of the Presiding Bishop's Advisory Committee to the Home Department of the National Council. This committee advised of the needs for strengthening and advancing the deaf work throughout the Church. The Episcopal deaf of the Diocese were hosts to the Annual Convention of the Conference of Church Workers among the Deaf in 1962. The convention was held at Kanuga with 125 clergy and laity throughout the United States attending.

That year Mr. Fortune traveled to Texas to meet with a committee interested in establishing work with the deaf in that Diocese. He appeared on radio and television in New York, explaining the work of the Episcopal Church with the deaf.

The Reverend Mr. James Fortune still serves as missionary for the deaf, but due to a heart attack in April 1976 he has been forced to curtail his activity throughout the Diocese. He conducts services here in Durham when his health will permit. Mr. Fortune plans to retire when a replacement is found and trained.

Due to vandalism, Ephphatha Church had to close its doors to the deaf in 1975. The deaf congregation now meets at St. Joseph's.

Main Sources Consulted

Journal(s) of the . . . Convention of the Diocese of North Carolina.

North Carolina Churchman. Scattered issues.

Interview with the Reverend Mr. James Fortune.

DAVID YATES

Sibyl G. Powe and Louise Newton

"He was one of the few men I have known in my life in whom I found absolute integrity," the Reverend Mr. James Cox, Church of the Incarnation, Dallas, Texas, said.

"He stood like a rock for what he believed to be right," the Reverend Mr. Thom Blair, former rector of Christ Church, Charlotte, declared.

"Upon a few choice spirits, he made the impact of a lifetime. Upon others, he had a delayed effect--conversions in retrospect," Arthur Ben Chitty, Chairman of Funds for Episcopal Colleges, recalled.

"What he was, he plainly was, and his convictions were audible, visible, understandable, known," the Reverend Mr. Tom Thrasher, former rector of Chapel of the Cross, Chapel Hill, wrote.

"He was the conscience of the Diocese," Bishop Edwin A. Penick avowed.

"My ministry is based in a large part on his ministry. He was a great influence on my life," the Reverend Mr. L. Bartine Sherman, former rector of St. Philip's, Durham, offered.

"Whoever knew David Yates was bound to know Our Lord," Kay Brownell, former Durham resident, stated simply.

David Watt Yates was born in Charlotte, North Carolina, September 4, 1904. He was the son of David Schenck, a prominent Charlotte insurance man, and Edith May Will Yates. His mother was an Episcopalian; his father was a Presbyterian. His mother's brother, Theodore S. Will, was an Episcopal minister.

He had one older brother, William, and a younger sister, Clair, now Mrs. Andrew Owen, both of whom still live in Charlotte. Clair recalls that David was mischievous when he was a little boy, but she insists "he never did a mean thing in all his life." In her early snapshots of him, David appeared as a cherubic, blue-eyed blond. Even as an adult, he possessed that innocent, sweet expression of childhood.

When and how did David become interested in the ministry? We know he attended the Presbyterian church briefly when he was quite young, but that he spent the rest of his life as a totally committed Episcopalian. His sister, Clair, thinks their mother always wanted him to be a minister. She also believes Bishop Edwin A. Penick encouraged David toward the seminary. (The Bishop was rector of St. Peter's Church in Charlotte when David was a very active communicant there.)

David grew to be a tall, almost gangly man; yet he had the grace and

style of an athlete. He loved sports from all standpoints--as a player, as a coach, and as a spectator. But most of all, he appreciated the human relationships which he encountered in the sports arena. He preferred structured team sports, and he operated best when playing by the rules of the game.

David's mother died of cancer when David was a senior in high school (1921). He had wanted to go to college, and he dreamed of entering seminary. But with his father a tubercular invalid and his sister, Clair, and brother, Bill, interested in college too, he had to postpone his own education for a while. After graduation from Charlotte High School, David went to work at the Thompson Orphanage, in Charlotte. He was associated with the Orphanage for six years, serving as secretary and athletic director. During this period he lived at home with his ill father.

Soon after his father died, David enrolled at the University of the South, Sewanee, Tennessee (1927), majoring in English, History, and Greek--all three! He was older, of course, than most of his classmates, but this did not deter him from succeeding in the classroom or in extracurricular activities. Valedictorian of his class, Phi Beta Kappa, and letters for four years in basketball and tennis were the honors he earned. He also sang in the Sewanee glee club. During those college years, he worked at a number of summer jobs, including one with Duke Power Company in Charlotte.

In the spring of 1934, he received the Bachelor of Divinity degree from Virginia Theological Seminary and was ordained as Deacon on June 21 of that same year by Bishop Penick. Bishop Penick ordained David into the Priesthood on January 16, 1935.

David's first clerical assignment was as Assistant to the Rector of Calvary Church, Tarboro, 1934-35. He became rector of St. Philip's Episcopal Church, Durham, November 12, 1935, and he served here for ten years.

In Durham, he rented a furnished room from Mrs. Ethel Lipscomb on Duke Street. During World War II, he often rode his bicycle from the Lipscomb house to the Parish House on East Main Street. (The new Parish House had not been built, and David's office was in a little wooden structure behind the church.) Once, on a particularly cold day, with head ducked low and bicycle flying along, David ran into an automobile and was badly bruised and lacerated. In spite of his injuries, he managed to get to St. Philip's in time to conduct the regular eleven o'clock service (a bit shakily).

David developed a parish ministry which was unusual, even in the days of small, close parishes. He was a real shepherd to his flock. He knew every family in his church--and he knew them well, including their children, relatives, friends, and neighbors. He was like a member of the family. The amazing thing was that he had the capability of being a part of <u>everybody's</u> family in his church. He kept in touch with what they were all doing, and he shared their day-by-day joys as well as their sorrows. He visited them often in their homes. (It was a standing joke that he always seemed to arrive about dinner-time. Of course another plate would be added, and David

would enjoy the proffered food as well as the fellowship.) He called on all new visitors at St. Philip's almost before they had time to get home from church.

Since he never married, his idea about the responsibilities of mothers with young children was somewhat naive. Several parishioners recall David's coming to the hospital to see a new mother and infant; and while there, he would try to persuade the mother to teach a church-school class or undertake some other church duty the following Sunday. When there were objections to his requests, he chided that each of us has duties in the Church as well as in the home, at work, and in the community.

The practices of religion were an important part of his parish ministry; they were obligatory; and they were intended to cultivate Christian discipline, which he felt was as essential as Christian service. He set rigorous standards for his parishioners, by example as well as by admonition, and though his strait-laced rules turned off some, they provided most parishioners with enough strict guidelines easily to define their relationship to the Church.

To David, the Church was the pivot from which all action revolved!

His ministry included visiting all Episcopalians, no matter where they were from, who were confined in local hospitals. He even requested diocesan priests to send him names of parishioners from their home towns who were patients in Durham so that he could contact them.

This kind of personal ministry is recognized as being extremely time-consuming and emotionally draining. Today, it has become full-time employment for many hospital chaplains. But David Yates never thought of complaining about the personal toll. He frequently worked a twelve- to fourteen-hour day, tireless, indefatigable, and cheerful in his work with those in need. He made it abundantly clear, however, that being a friend to many was not a technique he used to enhance his own popularity, but a means of translating his Lord's message of love.

No one will ever know how much of his small income he gave away. When there were needs in the parish that others could or would not meet, he tried to help with what little he had. He lived simply and frugally on his inadequate salary, and his friends and family noticed that sometimes he was actually ravenous when invited "to stay for dinner." His worldly possessions were meager. In Tarboro and Durham, his bedroom was furnished by the landlady. In Chapel Hill, his efficiency apartment was furnished by loans of second-hand furniture from dear friends, Dewey and Lonnie London. He never collected any of the material things most of us surround ourselves with. He did not, for instance, have a large library or record collection or works of art or attractive clothes or even the gadgets that make life easier. If he collected anything, it was people.

An important aspect of the man David was the unwavering manner in which he carried out his convictions. Some people, including those closest

to him, considered him stubborn and uncompromising. However, almost everyone respected his integrity and tenacity even when they disagreed with him.

Once at a Diocesan Convention when David was espousing endlessly a controversial point, Bishop Penick admonished him to "sit down, say no more, and let the convention make its decision."

Yet the Bishop later described David as the "conscience of the Diocese," and in private said, "David has more Christianity in his little finger than I have in my whole body."

World War II created a difficult moral issue which David felt he must face head-on. He began quietly to preach pacifism. His sermons were often about the wrongs of warfare and the wrongs of conscription. Even if his parishioners had accepted the first wrong (which was difficult, at best, during a popular war), it was too much to expect them to endorse the individual's wrong in serving when called to combat. Most St. Philipians had members of their family already inducted into the armed forces, and some had borne the tragic loss of loved ones in the war.

He encouraged dances in the old parish house arranged for the servicemen stationed at Camp Butner, at Duke University. He always attended these functions. The dances proved to be successful; there were often as many as two hundred young people jammed into the parish house for the Saturday night occasions.

David's earnest and relentless stand on the war made many St. Philipians uncomfortable with him. Yet in the midst of his critics, some were saying, "I can't go along with his pacifist ideas, but I know David is taking the Christian point of view."

If this period of his life could be termed "a crusade," it would have to be interpreted as a sacrificial endeavor. For the most part, David's words were falling on deaf ears. There was practically no support for his condemnation of the war either in the Parish or in the Diocese. He might have found some audience on a national scale, but David rarely worked beyond Diocesan lines.

This must have been a terribly lonely time for David Yates. It also must have tested his faith. But his commitment was strong--even without hope of compensation.

In the telling, it might seem that David's ministry was an enigma. On the one hand, he took a conservative stand on a Christian's duty toward his church; on the other hand, he was considered by some to be almost radical on moral, social issues of his day. But wasn't he sincerely and simply following the teachings of the Church in all situations?

David will be remembered for his work with young people. He built a strong Young People's Service League at St.Philip's. He was able to do this only because young people genuinely liked and admired him. One of

the projects undertaken by the youth of the Church was the publication of a lengthy (sometimes as many as twelve pages) bulletin entitled "St. Philip's Press."

During summers, David directed athletics or an entire camp at Cheshire, Vade Mecum, and Kanuga. His worn blue blazer with padded elbows was a familiar sight to hundreds of North Carolina Episcopal boys and girls. He always wore the old blazer at softball games and other sporting events.

He found it easy to relate to young people on the playing field, but at other times it was difficult for him to communicate. For example, David's annual sermon on "Christians and Sex" sent the teenagers into hysterics. They thought his old-fashioned bachelor ideas were funny. But in spite of their amusement, there was a tinge of love and respect. Perhaps it was because they knew he cared.

It was while David was rector of St. Philip's that plans were made to build a new parish house, but he did not stay long enough to see the building completed.

In the Diocese of North Carolina, David was a member of the Standing Committee from 1942-47; deputy to the General Convention, 1940, 1943, 1946, and 1949; an Examining Chaplain 1945-55; secretary to the Executive Council 1935-38, 1939-40, 1944-47, 1949-50, and member 1954-57; chairman of the Department of Promotion 1949-52; and chairman of the Department of Missions 1954-55.

He was a trustee of the University of the South 1937-46, and a trustee of St. Augustine's College 1945-59.

In April of 1945 David left Durham and St. Philip's to become the rector of the Chapel of the Cross in Chapel Hill. He was forty, his real youth behind him. When he left Chapel Hill to go to Sewanee, he was fifty-four. The fourteen years that he was in Chapel Hill were the years that are the most productive in most people's lives. And truly his ministry there was remarkable. The Reverend Mr. Peter Lee, present rector of the Chapel of the Cross, said recently that David was still a strong force in the parish, though it has been eighteen years since he left.

His visible accomplishments there were, to say the least, imposing. In David's own account, written for the Parish Register, we find that "Early in 1950 a Parish Planning Committee was appointed to study the needs of the Parish and to make recommendations for its future development in the light of the anticipated growth of the town and the University." This foresight resulted in the restoration of the nineteenth-century church, which was next door to the main parish church, and which had been found in March 1950 to be unsafe. The restoration was completed by February 1951, less than a year later, to the tune of $21,000.

Two much greater accomplishments also came from this looking ahead. First, the congregation of the Chapel of the Cross already numbered

more than the four hundred considered to be the best size for an effective ministry, and David and the Vestry started a new church in a growing section of Chapel Hill. The Church of the Holy Family opened its doors in December 1953, not quite three years later, with 143 communicants. Then the needs of the home church were also expanding, and the third big project was the renovation and enlarging of the parish house. This was started in May 1955 and finished in September 1958, at a cost of $200,000. By 1959, when David left Chapel Hill, and only three years after the beginning of the project, $167,000 of this had been pledged. Those of us who knew David often tend to think of him as primarily a spiritual leader. These rather dull facts, figures, and dates show that he was also a mover and builder of formidable ability and despatch.

Besides buildings, other visible accomplishments were the chairs in the aisles, put there Sunday after Sunday to accommodate the overflow. And the Sunday School grew to such an extent that by 1950 the superintendent reported that they would have to turn children away or run double sessions unless they could enlarge their quarters.

Another thing that David did at the Chapel of the Cross was visible in a different way. About 1952 the first black members were added to the roll, a law student and his family. This was accomplished with the minimum of uproar by the quiet preparation which David always made before undertaking something new. Before the children went to Sunday School every white family was telephoned and the situation explained; and when the women of the auxiliary, as it was then called, complained that they did not mind the blacks at church or at Sunday School but their meetings were at people's homes, David simply reminded them that the meetings could be held in the Parish House.

All these things were just the outward and visible signs of what David accomplished in Chapel Hill. It is said that the priest is the vessel by which man is brought to God, through His Church. This was never truer of anybody than of David. We have seen how he did this in his work at St. Philip's: his enthusiastic work with young people; his closeness to his parishioners; his reaching out to strangers, the sick, and the lonely; and his fierce championing of all missionary work.

In the research library at UNC there is a partial file of the Cross Roads, the parish bulletin for the Chapel of the Cross. It is a mine of information about David's work in Chapel Hill, and how he went about it. Two of the entries are typical. On November 10, 1946, we find: "Eric Jones, his wife and ten children have lost by fire all money, tobacco crops, and most belongings. Any who wish to contribute furniture, clothing, money, or any other form of aid will please leave them in the parish house, or telephone about heavier articles for which a truck will be needed." And on February 27, 1949, this note about a congregational meeting: "On this night the Church comes first. Someone called it 'church family night.' Let us make it so and find it a most agreeable duty." This is such a good example of how David got people to do things. "On this night the Church comes first," and then "a most agreeable duty." Here is certainty and a sense of proportion. He doesn't pretend it isn't a duty,

but suggests that it is a most agreeable duty. In this simple twenty-four-word notice we see a whole attitude toward the Church.

Then we find in the North Carolina Churchman for February 1949 an account of the bazaar of that year. Something over $1,000 was made, and it was allotted to the Auxiliary current fund, chapel repair, carpet for the church, the work for Alaska, St. Agnes's Hospital in Raleigh, the rectory for the missionary to the deaf, world relief, and an undesignated fund. These isolated bits from his fourteen years in Chapel Hill perhaps shed a little light on the range of his concern, and the simplicity with which he had at things.

We can hardly leave our record of David's activities (we could never complete it), begun in Durham and continued in Chapel Hill, without mentioning the formidable schedule he kept, of services held as well as personal activities. He was always seeing needs that had to be met, and perhaps in a university town there is a wider variety of needs than in a more conventional parish. For example, he had, at least for a time, daily communion services at 7:00 or 7:30. There were also Evening Prayer services every day at 5:45, held by the pre-ministerial students. And in 1948 he started having Sunday Evening Prayer regularly, with a short sermon. This was to help young parents, who could get a sitter more readily at night. He added in the Cross Roads, however, that it would also be helpful to those "who would like to devote more than an hour on Sunday to the primary purpose for which the day is set aside." Lent, too, was a very real and serious part of his ministry. Many services were added in that season, and so many people attended the daily 5:15 service regularly that it had to be moved to the big church. Perhaps part of the reason for the crowds was the sense of Christian obligation David made the congregation feel. One year he said about the daily Lenten services, "I don't think that a half hour a day during Lent is too much to ask of a Christian when you consider what Christ did for us." An unforgettable series of Lenten talks were those of 1950, on the seven deadly sins.

What, then, were the invisible accomplishments, the intangible results of all this pouring out of David's spiritual as well as physical strength? We shall try to sum up briefly at the end of this paper, but we might mention here that in addition to the presence of David and his work still felt today by the permanent congregation, fourteen generations of students were enriched by his ministry, and some were changed for life. It is said that more students went into the ministry from his parish than any other parish in the country.

Then in September of 1959 David took on an even heavier assignment. He went as rector to Otey Memorial Church in Sewanee, Tennessee. As Sibyl and I read over our very few documents about David's work there, we realized anew that we are concerned here with a great clergyman. He undertook in Sewanee climactic things. It seems certain that one of the major things that attracted him to that parish was the Seminary at the University of the South there. Of course, Otey is also known as the most difficult parish in America, which must have been a challenge. But he had always been outspoken on the importance of supporting Sewanee energetically in our Diocese. In a way he had always had a commitment to Sewanee.

The integration of Otey parish is probably the most widely known of his achievements there, but probably the most important and enduring achievement was his work with what is known as the "theologs," or seminary students. About two hundred graduated while he was there. Someone said, "For them I believe you were second-century Christianity in action. Many a parish will be operated on a higher plane because of you. They've heard real sermons, they've seen real commitment." And again, "He labored as a teacher and painstakingly fashioned his sermons to bring the whole message of the church . . . to his flock. Critical decisions he made without regard for his own popularity, or well being. He set an example in personal stewardship, voluntarily reducing his own income to subsistence level . . . ." This last was to aid in his effort to raise the church's budget for work outside the parish to 50 percent of the total budget. When we think that the seminarians who went through his hands were two percent of that whole generation of clergy in America, we begin to realize how great his influence was.

An interesting sidelight of his work with the seminarians, and an example of his perceptiveness, was his work with the wives of the seminarians. He realized that many had married their husbands at a time when they had no idea of going into the ministry, and though their husbands now had a strong commitment, many wives did not, or found it very difficult. We can be sure his influence on them, too, was important, if not crucial.

The most spectacular part of his ministry in Sewanee was, of course, his work with integration. Under his leadership Otey Memorial became the first parish to desegregate in the Diocese of Tennessee. It has been suggested to us that it was on the departure of the priest-in-charge of St. Mark's Mission, the Negro parish in Sewanee, that this integration was started, and that David began this by desegrating the Sunday School first. It was made easier for the blacks to accept, perhaps, by the fact that St. Mark's was kept open for any blacks who wished to continue worshiping there. It is reported, though, that most members moved to Otey. At any rate, we can imagine the careful way in which David proceeded in this undertaking when we remember how he did it on a very much smaller scale in Chapel Hill.

Another example of his concern with the very great problems facing both blacks and whites at that time may be seen in an interesting article in the Living Church for October 11, 1964. Here he tells of the work that Otey's committee on Christian social relations did with the black children, newly integrated into the white schools and beginning to have trouble with their work. A summer school was organized which would give very close supervision to the pupils, with a teacher ratio of five to two. Tutorial work for the following fall was planned as well. High school students helped with the project, and, it is reported, "were thrilled that the Church was giving them something to do besides wash cars."

One of David's greatest interests was what was called proportionate giving, which we mentioned in passing above, that is, that at least half of the Church's budget should be earmarked for needs outside the parish. Otey was a consistent leader in the Diocese in this respect. In recognition of this concern, the congregation established the David W. Yates Scholarship to St. Mary's School in Sagada, the Philippines.

What was David Yates like? The first thing you noticed was how friendly he was. He found out who you were the first time you met him and from that moment on he knew who you were and a warm interest always flowed out toward you. And he was always cheerful--not loud cheerful, but a kind of gentle happiness. Perhaps that was one of the things that endeared him so to children.

But this friendliness stemmed from a deeper concern with people and their needs. He went out and looked for people who in his opinion belonged in the Church, or should be confirmed, or had some need. Soon after he went to Chapel Hill, whole chunks of families were confirmed. One can imagine him checking on the whole congregation to see who needed to be confirmed, and then going out and bringing them in. Sometimes he seemed to check on the whole town, and bring them into the Church.

Above all he was earnest, serene, godly. You felt this whenever you met him--on the street, in the school cafeteria, and at home when he visited you. But most of all you felt it in church. The first impression you got in church was David's simplicity. And it turned out to be an enduring one. He had a very plain style when reading the service, but it was at once thoughtful, earnest, and sure. The way he read the prayers, for example, helped to bring out the meaning. The way he emphasized the "dew of thy blessing" in the prayer for the clergy always made vivid the way God's blessings rain down upon us all. He always said, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners," reminding us that it was those who were conscious of their sin that Jesus came to help. But most vivid of all was the way he said, "Thou art the same Lord whose property is always to have mercy." One felt, somehow, that every person in the church, David himself, choir, and congregation, was in the presence of God.

Another important part of David's character was his practicality and realism. He knew that we all needed help, and he preached simple but useful sermons toward that end. He preached, for example, about the need for concentration, especially during the prayers. One was comforted when he said that at first it was difficult to concentrate more than ten minutes at a time. He often preached about the obligation to go to church at least once a week. He said that everyone should go to the 11:00 o'clock service on Sunday, and that the other services were extras. He wanted to make sure that the congregation met together as a whole, or as near as might be, at least once a week. And at least one of the reasons for this was that he always kept us up on our obligations.

A hymn he often had us sing was "Once to every man and nation," which includes these words: "New occasions teach new duties." David never left us in any doubt as to what our new duties were. It was his practice, though, to start early, and prepare us for the obligations; his sermons pointed out where duty lay, and gave concrete helps for carrying out that duty. They always started where the listener was, and then showed the way he should go. Then when the new obligation came up, we were as ready for it as possible.

Sometimes he seemed to set impossibly high standards. But they were

always set in perspective. He knew, proclaiming the truths of the Gospel as he did, what sinners we all were. But he sought us out, got us to Church, made us understand the forgiveness of God, and set us on the right path.

Main Sources Consulted

Cross Roads. Chapel of the Cross, Chapel Hill, N.C. Scattered issues.

North Carolina Churchman. Scattered issues.

Parish Register, Chapel of the Cross. Chapel of the Cross, Chapel Hill, N.C. 1945-59.

Interviews with:

Mrs. Clair Owen, of Charlotte.

The Reverend Mr. L. Bartine Sherman, of Charlotte.

Lawrence F. London, of Chapel Hill.

DATE DUE

JUL 0 1 1996			

DEMCO 38-297

Duke University Libraries
D00749902V

Duke Library Service Center
D00749902V